

# IRELAND TO-DAY

CULTURAL

VOL. 2 NO. 8

## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL .. ..	IRELAND TO-DAY	1
FOREIGN COMMENTARY .. ..	JOHN LUCY	4
TECHNICAL EDUCATION .. ..	S. J. MURRAY	9
WILLIAM ORPEN .. ..	SEAN KEATING	21
<i>Poem</i> : LA CHANSON DU MAL-AIMÉ .. ..	D. O DOBHAILEIN d'aistrigh o'n bhFrainncis	27
THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE .. ..	EDWARD SHEEHY	29
THE CHAOS OF THE MIND .. ..	NICHOLAS MANSERGH	37
<i>Poems</i> : NORTH WIND .. ..	BRIAN COFFEY	48
WINDS OF THE WORLD .. ..	EILEEN BRENNAN	48
<i>Short Story</i> : FAIR DAY .. ..	GARRETT O'DRISCOLL	49
<i>Letter of the Month</i> : THE PARIS EXHIBITION .. ..	FRANCES KELLY	58
ART: STOP-THIEF .. ..	JOHN DOWLING	61
MUSIC: FREE STATE BROADCASTING—II. .. ..	EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR	64
THEATRE: THEATRE-CRAFT .. ..	SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA	67
FILM: DISCONTINUITY .. ..	G. F. DALTON	73
COMING FILMS .. ..	LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE	76
CORRESPONDENCE .. ..		77
<i>Letters from</i> : REV. VICTOR WHITE, O.P., REV. GERALD FLANNAGAN, HON. ALBINA BRODERICK.		80
BOOK SECTION .. ..		80
<i>Reviews by</i> : CAPTAIN JOHN LUCY, DR. S. Ó CEALLAIGH, MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING, FITZROY PYLE, DONAGH MAC DONAGH, SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA, DENIS DEVLIN, LAURENCE ROSS, EDWARD SHEEHY, and others		
MONTH IN RETROSPECT .. ..	DENIS BARRY	92
<i>Cover Design by</i> SEÁN O'SULLIVAN, R.H.A.		

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**ONE SHILLING**

## NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A., here questions the motives that inspire our system of education.

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Film	..	..	..	LIAM Ó LAOGHAIRE.
Books	..	..	..	EDWARD SHEEHY, M.A.



## EDITORIAL

THE election and plebiscite results in the Twenty-six Counties—when again shall we have an unequivocal name for our *country*?—were gratifying to us only in that they were in such accord with our forecast. We do not pretend to see in the election results a writing on the wall, but we repeat that Mr. de Valera's Government will want to begin to *do* things, if they are to survive long. On the contrary, we do not think his principal opponents can take any hope out of the defection from his ranks, which certainly will not trickle into theirs. As we view it, the middle path will never make for stability, being always under fire from Left or Right.

The biggest weakness in Mr. de Valera's administration has been the perpetuation of the almost equal division politically of our people ever since the "Treaty." At first there was a more or less equal division of the fighting and national groups in existence at that time, and a war-ravaged people found themselves taking sides, half of them brave enough or stubborn enough to carry on the struggle and the other half, human enough to want to stop. The politicians could well be counted on to camouflage the one decision, so that it appeared to satisfy all the *real* demands of the other, but without the discomfort, and a confused people took the line of least resistance. What followed when Mr. de Valera's Government succeeded the previous administration was that major points of difference were gradually whittled down until it was finally a matter of degree rather than of essence. The basis of principle, the instruments employed and—only very gradually—the conception of that final estate held to be attainable in practice, tended ultimately to coincide.

How, then, can the people be blamed if they appear to be irreparably and with a hopeless permanence, divided? The fault lies with those who have made so little difference between the present policy and that of their predecessors, that mere personal loyalties alone will ensure the persistence of the purely party cleavage that keeps our reasonably national-minded peoples apart. And whilst their separation is not mainly, at any rate, one affecting normal intercourse or business relations,

yet the mandate given to their respective political leaders has a disrupting effect on the whole body politic. Energies are fruitlessly and needlessly dissipated, and the misplaced direction of most of our effort keeps us permanently enslaved and a generation, if not a century, back in development and achievement.

The cure is by the adoption of a policy which by its very *difference* from that of their predecessors will secure recognition as something tangible, understandable and unequivocal. There will then be no confusion and no parading of Government Tweedledum and Opposition Tweedledee. The people will then, and then only, be able at last to discern the essential merits of the issues before them. Then will come the possibility, not of a "national" government, pathetically advocated, but of a unified strong government of the people.

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The population census of the Six Counties of Northern Ireland has registered a welcome increase, bringing the figure up to that reached fifty years ago, the exact figure being 1,279,753, which represents an increase over the previous census figure of 23,192 or 1.85 *per cent.* This contrasts favourably with the total for the Twenty-Six Counties last year of 2,965,854, which, compared with the previous census figure, showed a decrease of 6,138 or 0.2 *per cent.*

But there, the North's cause for jubilation ends. The birth rate is declining; the number of males are in the minority (though, as if to compensate, Nature rushes in with a greater natural increase in the male than in the female population); the towns batten and urbanisation proceeds apace, the country failing to retain more than 30 *per cent.* of its natural increase. Of particular concern, where national reunion is in mind, is the decline, and most ominously the decline of females, in the border counties of Tyrone, Fermanagh and Armagh. The association of the figures and trends exhibited by the recent census and that for the major part of the country last year would provide a useful study.

●

The dependence of Irish trade unionism on the parent body in England, from which it has developed, is, in view of our specious claims to independence and sovereignty, inconsistent, if not nationally undignified. Despite the modern tendency to form separate Irish unions, we were surprised to learn from an authoritative source, that about 40 *per cent.* of the movement



in Ireland to-day was still under the direction of executives drawn largely from the British portion of the organizations.

We think that this is one aspect of the whole trade union question which should be made a subject for early enquiry. Another is the matter of arbitration, and the arbitrament of force which, in the industrial or commercial world, resolves itself into the weapon of the strike or the lockout. It is about time someone analysed the whole function and machinery of strikes, so that the workers might, at least, be as advantageously placed as their better-educated employers in understanding the full implications and limitations of strikes.

●

A recent proposal for the municipalization of cemeteries brings once again to mind two somewhat related anomalies, both skirting on the major problem of poverty. One is that the money which the taxpayer has to contribute to the maintenance of the destitute may first and without question, find itself in the pocket of the slum landlord—payment for a service which should long since have been liquidated. The second anomaly is that the very poor, cheated out of what was theirs by God-given right, all through this life, having it in their power to wreak a small but fitting revenge of imposing on us the cost for their interment, instead assume the full responsibility for this charge. For years and years before their awaited death, they are bringing the day closer by the very denials and savings they must scrape together to ensure for themselves a decency of burial that shames, but for them softens, the cruel hardships of their lives.

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To the many visitors within our four shores we bid welcome. Although this year has been remarkable for the very early start made by tourists, August, nevertheless, seems destined always to be the crowning month of the Irish season. The focal point is undoubtedly the Horse Show, which under the skilled administration of the Royal Dublin Society, has established itself for more years than we can boast of remembering as a national institution. There horse-breeding receives its supreme fillip and likewise, too, native industry and the arts. But it will be best be known as a social function, where people of every walk of life and every creed or political persuasion rub shoulders, yet generate no friction or sparks in the process.

With the venerable Society, we, in our youthfulness, have something in common. We, without motto or crest, would like to share with them the sentiment: *Nostri plena laboris.*

## FOREIGN COMMENTARY

IT is always a difficult matter to keep abreast of French political issues. One thing, however, stands clear as the main reason for the many chops and changes in recent years, and that is the necessity for a solid economic and financial recovery based on the stabilization of the Franc, and this had been, and is, regarded as the key to all other problems. M. Poincaré saw this eleven years ago, but public opinion defeated him, and diverted his energies to badly needed social reforms.

M. Blum was forced to put the cart before the horse for the same reasons, and the tactics he pursued were not very dissimilar to those followed by his predecessor, and now, at last, coloured by the many quarrels and bickerings characteristic of both Chamber and Senate, M. Chautemps' Government have secured their Plenary Powers Bill, and the ultimate devaluation of the Franc is for all practical purposes a matter of fact. A tripartite agreement with the U.S.A. and Britain to control devaluation may help to ensure the success of this latest measure, though in France opinions differ, and the new Government hangs by a thread.

Opposition speakers of the Popular Front talk of surrender to high finance, and dread a return to inflation, which to the ordinary citizen means a rise in the price of goods and services. Yet, both Communists and Socialists voted grudgingly for the new bill, mainly to prop up the weakening prestige of the Popular Front, and to avoid internal troubles in face of the present international situation.

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In European affairs the Spanish Civil War is still the bogey. Having abandoned the naval control scheme for the second time, Berlin and Rome offered a new scheme disliked by France and Britain, whose counter solution was also refused by the dictator states, and non-intervention broke down following this deadlock.

The smaller European countries then looked to Britain, who was given the thankless task of devising yet another scheme, which was accepted as a basis for discussion.

The new scheme is a tardy compromise. The main points are the conditional granting of belligerent rights at sea to both parties in Spain, and the withdrawal of volunteers. The Spanish



Government is bound to be outraged by the recognition of Franco in any measure, and Russian feeling foretells this in the Soviet Press, which condemns the new plan as "A rotten compromise."

On the other hand, and apart altogether from Germany's complaint of a second attack by the Spanish Government on one of her warships, which led to the present squabble, both Italy and Germany would like to see naval control abandoned, so that Franco might get his chance to become master at sea. It is thought that a naval victory for the Insurgents following the Basque offensive might prove decisive.

Meanwhile, land control on the Spanish frontiers has also weakened, and this offers the opportunity for the importation of war stores by both sides in the conflict.

\* \* \*

Belgium has had a minor political crisis, when her Premier almost resigned. The King refused to accept M. Van Zeeland's resignation, which was tendered in sympathy with L. de Laveye, the Liberal Minister, who has already retired, as he was not in accord with his own party in their opposition to an amnesty for war traitors. It seems easy to be a "traitor" in a Belgium naturally divided into Teutons and Gauls, one group ever looking towards Germany, and the other with a French bias, easier even than in Ireland, where the term is light-heartedly shuttlecocked between political parties, and where it can be heard in moments of emotion applied by men of righteousness and blood to some less gallant male person of fighting age, whose discretion in days gone by may, or may not, have coupled the principle of secrecy in war with his juxtaposition to a bed.

\* \* \*

The British Government has now accepted the advice of the Royal Commission to partition Palestine, which is to be divided into two spheres—one Jewish and one Arab, and although the Jews will not get Jerusalem they are not altogether deprived of it, because the British wisely retain a new mandate over a third and smaller part, which includes "The holy hill of Zion" with Bethlehem and Jaffa. This seems to be the only redeeming feature in the re-arrangement. The Jews bitterly complain of the lack of strength on the part of Britain in not maintaining law and order in the past, and blame her for the undesirable present, and the Arabs remember one Lawrence, and his fair promises, while his ghost presumably reconciles Allah and Eloah, for he, too, failed to appreciate the principle of compromise.

In one respect the Jews should be satisfied, for they now really possess a national home, and a land of their own to do with what they will, and when they begin to administer that land, which incidentally is the home of a strong German colony, they may have less time to criticise the lack of responsibility in others.

\* \* \*

From Palestine an obvious step is to Poland, and another peck of trouble. The reunited Poland of the immediate post-war period was a new state full of promise. Agriculturally she was self-supporting. She was rich in minerals and coal, and had access to the sea. The Russian invasion of 1920 was only a temporary set-back. The Poles were keen, intelligent, hopeful, and intensely patriotic. Unfortunately capital was scarce, and foreign investors were encouraged. This was bad, as the foreigners now possess about half of Poland's industrial capital. Other factors worsened the situation. The population, mainly rural, increased at the rate of about half a million a year. The safety valve of emigration was shut down by laws passed in Germany, Canada, and the U.S.A. The huge absorption of Polish labour by France suddenly ceased. There was a drop in agricultural prices in Poland, and the countrymen came to the towns. Unemployment increased. The countrymen seeking work in the cities saw with jealous eyes that the Jew was everywhere. There are three million Jews in Poland. Most of them do business in the cities. They constitute about 70 per cent. of Poland's traders, and about 10 per cent. of the population. The realization of these facts brought about agitation, and the recent assaults on the Jews followed. The Poles now wish that more of their Jews would settle in Palestine, to make room for Polish enterprise in town commerce. As a matter of fact, there has been a steadily increasing immigration of Polish Jews into Palestine, until the late disturbances in the Holy Land, and, moreover, the Polish Jews in Palestine fostered a useful overseas trade with their old land.

The question of the Jew in Poland is a vexed one.

Although there has been an influx of fresh Russian Jews into Poland in recent times, the fact remains that the majority have been established there for hundreds of years, and on that account, and also because of their initiative, organizing ability and other good qualities as citizens, they deserve much consideration. At the same time, Poland is very hard hit.

She sells her sugar abroad eight times cheaper than at home, and her coal at one-third of its home price.



Her condition is that of the "Have nots," and she lacks many essential raw materials for her new industries. Gold is the only thing that can buy raw materials consistently, and the nations that control the world's gold and raw materials are the U.S.A., Britain, France, Russia, and Holland. These five are the "Haves." One wonders what they are going to do about it. Have they the right to corner, and to say to the poorer nations in the manner of the modern pagan business man: "Pay, or do without?" This is the attitude of mind that causes wars.

It would seem far better for the world if the Big Five formed an economic league of nations to plan redistribution and a general ease-up, which by an all-round stimulation of trade would provide the best antidote to world unrest, and give every nation the sporting chance of living a fair life.

One does not require to be a diplomat or a financial expert to appreciate the shrieking truth that pride and greed are the cause of most evils to-day.

\* \* \*

In India the Congress or Nationalist party have come to an agreement in the matter of the powers of the British Provincial Governors, and after five months' boycott of the new constitution have resolved to form ministries in the six out of eleven provinces, where they were elected to office.

Further East, China is again disturbed. Japanese troops in the vicinity of Peiping (old Peking) while carrying out peace manoeuvres with ball cartridge and live shell have clashed with local Chinese garrisons, and claim the power to negotiate separately with the forces of Northern China, in opposition to the wishes of the central Nanking Government.

Manchukuo has proved as poor a prize to Japan as Abyssinia to Italy, and two of the provinces of North China are a tempting bait to the Japanese Military Party, who retain their independent position, and can still direct the policy of the Japanese Government. This policy now appears to take the form of the expression "Europe's misfortune is Japan's opportunity," and North China is invaded. It is estimated that 100 war planes, and 20,000 troops are concentrated in the vicinity of Peiping.

The Chinese have begun to move their armed forces northward, and the Central Government is concerned about the attitude of some of the higher military command, who are as eager to fight as the Japanese. At the same time it is hinted that at least one of the Chinese divisions is not altogether loyal.

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A war in the Far East is inevitable, unless both sides take

heed of the unexpected warning of the American Secretary of State, who spoke with grave authority to representatives of China and Japan. He made no bones either of the possibilities of American intervention. This attitude may shock supporters of the Monroe doctrine, but it is bound to be regarded with the keenest interest and hope by the nations of Europe.

America's material interests in China are comparatively small, and one can only judge her action as springing from the best motives, unless she has some secret agreement with Britain, whose naval forces are, of necessity, concentrated in western waters.

As anticipated in these pages last month, nothing has come of the fight for the islands in the Amur river on the Siberian frontier. Casualties were inflicted on both Russians and Japanese in a hot engagement, but safety first policy prevailed, and a peaceful settlement was made. Japan, curiously enough, occupied the disputed islands while negotiations were proceeding, and apparently still holds them.

At any rate, Russia looks as if she did not want war, and it is rumoured that one cause is suspected disaffection in her armed forces following the recent drastic "purge" of military commanders.

JOHN LUCY



# TECHNICAL EDUCATION

## *The Futility of the Present System*

ACCORDING to the Vocational Education Act, 1930 : "Technical education means education pertaining to trades, manufactures, commerce, and other industrial pursuits (including the occupations of girls and women connected with the household) and in subjects bearing thereon or relating thereto, and includes education in science and art (including, in the County Boroughs of Dublin and Cork, music) and also includes physical training."

This definition is vague, its vagueness is due to English tradition. G. Balfour, in his "Educational System of Great Britain and Ireland," states : "It is very difficult to give a clear and yet accurate account of the movement which in this country has been comprehended under the name of technical education." "In 1854 the Department of Science and Art was established . . . . it began its career with no definite recognition of any difference between technical instruction in particular and secondary education in general, and in consequence only made confusion worse confounded."

Technical education under British administration would be better defined as a myth. In nineteenth century England, as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution, there arose a mass of working-class people, on whom was conferred the franchise; it was desirable that the impression should be created, in the minds of this class, that it shared in the institutions of the country. Technical schools and institutes were its glory.

In pre-Reformation times all trades, and industries, legislated through associations called Guilds, in all matters relating to hours of labour, wages, prices, quality of goods, and in the training of apprentices, both mentally and morally.<sup>1</sup>

Brentano informs us that "under pretence of a holy zeal for

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Bretano *The History and Development of Guilds*.

the purity of religion," the whole property of the craft-guilds was confiscated by the Crown, under Acts passed in the reign of Henry VIII and his successor.

The effect of the dissolution of the craft-guilds was so bad, that in Queen Elizabeth's reign remedial measures were adopted. By the Act 5th Elizabeth it was enacted that no one, whether master or journeyman, could lawfully exercise "Any art, mystery or manual occupation, except he had been brought up therein" in an apprenticeship of at least seven years.

It was also provided that hours of labour be fixed every year, and wages assessed, by Justices of the Peace. This law remained in force down to the nineteenth century. It did not apply to Ireland.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the capitalists who desired to achieve economic dictatorship, realising the power that the machines conferred on them, made a bid for complete control of the means of production. For this purpose it was necessary to repeal the Act 5th Elizabeth. This was done in 1814, according to Hansard "without any efficient substitute for what was repealed."

Thus the nineteenth century saw the English working people deprived of their necessary industrial training, as they had previously been deprived of education. No doubt, the effect of this deprivation was not immediate, training in some trades still persisted, but by the end of the century the loss was apparent, and protests were made, so it became a matter of political expediency to make a show of restitution, which was done through the establishment of technical education. But it was only a show, for there has never emerged any adequate national system: for upwards of fifty years there have been numerous consular, and other official reports, dealing with technical education abroad, deputations have also gone abroad to study various systems—all this being meant to convey the idea that something is being done—but up to date nothing has emerged in the way of a satisfactory system. No general



concessions have been made to the working classes, in the way of restoring to them the efficient training of the Guild system; any effort made to improve their knowledge, or technique, must be made in their own spare time, and the opportunities to do this are very limited.

In Ireland, during 1896, The Recess Committee had under consideration the question of adequate provision for training in agriculture and industry. No members of this Committee had first-hand knowledge of the matters dealt with, and so were altogether in the hands of witnesses.

Some of these witnesses were foreigners and were, no doubt, experts in their own country, but when it became a question of devising an institution for another country, especially when that country was Ireland, of which owing to propaganda so many erroneous ideas prevailed, an intimate knowledge of the people's social and political history was requisite, and an ability to make due allowance for the lag of centuries. Here foreign experts fail.

The setting up of The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in 1899, as a result of the proceedings of the Recess Committee, inflicted upon us a number of officials of English selection. It could not be said, of these officials, that they were expert in the organisation and management of technical education, there were no proofs in that direction, since in England the field was uncultivated, nor had they any knowledge of industrial or commercial strategy; the appointments were simply made in the exercise of patronage. The result has been, that we have come into possession of a lumbering and expensive institution, quite incapable of assisting in the development of our country, or of contributing in any way to its wealth.

The Vocational Education Act of 1930 was supposed to be a measure reforming the whole regime of technical education, as set up by the Act of 1899, but with the exception of continuation education—with which we have previously dealt,

and also excepting the fact that the local rate in aid was made mandatory, instead of voluntary—there was no vital change. The making of the rate mandatory was felt by the officials to be necessary, because there was a rising tide of adverse criticism, created by the failure of technical education to produce any result after so many years.

Our examination of subjects and organisation covers the whole period since 1900, because, as we have stated, there has not been any vital change made by the Act of 1930. If we were faced with the proposition, that in a suggested scheme of technical education we could not deal with all trades or industries at once, it would then become a question, to what industries we should give preferential treatment. When it comes to competition, some industries are not as favourably placed as others, they are less sheltered; if these industries are of importance, then they should be listed for prior treatment. The building-trades, and such jobbing engineering as we have, whilst no doubt important, are not as unfavourably placed as textiles, garment-making, car and wagon building, cabinet-making, and sundry other trades.

The Department of Technical Instruction advised or encouraged Committees to concentrate on building trades, or engineering. The reason for this concentration on building-trades classes, notably on woodwork, is to be found in the statement made by the late Major Bryan Cooper, during a debate in Dáil Éireann, relative to the setting up of the Technical Education Commission in 1926. Major Cooper said: "The whole scheme of technical instruction was based on the training of the farmer, to do the small jobs about his place, without having to call in a tradesman." The outcome of this policy has been to multiply within the country the number of incompetent workmen. The classes formed under local schemes have given a smattering of knowledge to many who have, on the strength of this knowledge, made their way to town and city, where they have adulterated the crafts, to the very great detriment of sound construction.



One can only qualify the building trade classes, in town and country, as very mediocre; and they must necessarily be so, seeing the material they rely upon, and the time spent in instruction.

Engineering classes are no better, they are just a pottering in metal work. It is significant that metallurgy, one of the most important branches of modern engineering, is not mentioned; and as to the so-called motor engineering, it does not seem to be realised that a mere ability to put things together does not involve any knowledge of the fundamentals of construction.

Commerical instruction, which is made up largely of very elementary matter, is merely of secondary importance, since goods must first be produced before their values can be posted and dealt with.

The object of the domestic training branch is nebulous. The Press has informed us, with leaded type, that it is proposed to build, in the centre of the City of Dublin, a large central school of Domestic Economy. Buildings are a great feature in all technical education schemes. "Emphasis has been placed on building, very often to the sacrifice of equipment, no doubt with the thought that a substantial structure increases one's confidence in the management."<sup>1</sup> The building of a large factory-like structure, complete with all the latest gadgets, and right in the heart of the city, where the collecting of hundreds of students must necessarily add to the complication of city management, does not seem to us the best medium for the promulgation of domestic science. These activities which we have referred to are all related to life, and, therefore, there must be some relationship between them, but they are carried on as if they had no reference to any cardinal fact, thus showing that there is a want of leadership.

There is another fact, in relation to all classes conducted in technical schools, which must be fully understood, and this

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<sup>1</sup> Kahn *Design in Art and Industry*. Scribners, 1935, p. 186.

is the significance of the term "advanced." "Advanced" is only a relative term. The child in the third standard of the primary school is advanced, relative to the child in the first, but relative to the work to be ultimately done, third standard is little better than first standard. The term "advanced" in technical school work is analogous. Relative to the work that should be done, in such schools, advanced work is non-existent.

Almost all the work done in technical education is done at night time ; there is a small portion done in the day time, by holders of scholarships. Some of these scholarships seem designed, according to evidence submitted to Technical Education Commission, to decoy useful members from trades, subsequently immuring them in technical schools, where their lives are passed in what has been described as "life-rusting routine."

With the exception of these scholarships, night classes are the prevailing mode. The hours of darkness do not seem to have been intended, by nature, for work ; man's vitality lowers as darkness advances. No matter how efficient artificial light may be, production is always less than in day-work. To condemn youth to this system of overtime work is unnatural, and it will never achieve anything worth while.

In an article published in the Press, we read :<sup>1</sup> "The ordinary student was unable to keep pace with the demands of the 'four-course system' of evening classes ; his groundwork was insufficient ; he became disheartened with his indifferent progress, and ceased to attend after a year or two." Referring to the Report of the Commission on Technical Education, we find the following figures relating to above statement :—

Sessions :	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
1913-14 to and including 1924-25	100	29 Average	6 Average	4 Average

<sup>1</sup> cf. *Irish Times*, January 21st, 1932. The article was subsequently added to and published by Department of Education. It is from the Department's issue we quote.



From these figures we learn that the average drop in the fourth year was ninety-six per cent. If this drop was due to the fact that "the student's groundwork was insufficient," where was the sense in designing courses that ninety-six per cent. of the students could not follow? The statement does not give the truth of the matter.

For night classes, 6 hours per week for 30 weeks, or 180 hours per session, is taken as a reasonable attendance; for comparative purposes, we must equate this to day-time work. Efficiency is reduced at night-time, owing to physical fatigue and artificial lighting. If we allow that night-time efficiency is 70 per cent. of day-time efficiency, we place it at a high figure. Owing to a variety of causes, attendance at night classes can, only in exceptional cases, reach ninety per cent., around sixty per cent. is nearer the correct figure. Again, we will take the figure of seventy per cent. From both causes, the 180 hours become, in terms of day-time work, an actual 88 hours per annum. Consider any subject; what knowledge of it can be attained, by a youth, in eighty odd hours made up of little bits? Take his progress, in conjunction with the fact that he receives no encouragement, and that his reward is problematical, and we must conclude that the average student views his task as a hopeless one. Hence his efforts peter out.

In apprenticeship days what was the position? Taking the period of apprenticeship at six years, and working hours at 50 per week, for 50 weeks, we obtain a total number of 2,500 hours per annum. If only half of this amount were spent in useful work under instruction, the apprentice would receive 1,250 hours' instruction per annum. In the technical school he receives 88 hours per annum. It must be remembered that, since technical schools were established, there is now no workshop instruction. An apprenticeship in the present, according to the figures we have given, is not at all comparable to that of a period prior to the technical school era.

Some industrial arms, to counteract the evils of the present

day system, have set up their own workshop training schools. Amongst such is the Ford Company at Manchester. The setting up of this school was referred to at the meeting of the Company held in London, March, 1931. In the Report of the meeting the following passage occurs :—“ *It is imperative, if our nation is to regain and retain the prestige of British workmanship, that the rising generation shall acquire the disciplined skill and patience and craftsmanship of their forefathers.*”

The apprentices in this school receive instruction in the proportions of one week in the school—seven hours per day, and two weeks in the workshop—eight hours per day, all day-time work. The boys are admitted to the works when they leave the elementary school, without further previous preparation. The time spent in the workshop school approximates to six hundred hours per annum. Compare this with our 88 hours, and the absurdity of our technical school reconstruction programme becomes manifest.

The alternative that has been proposed to the system of night classes is a system of part-time day classes. Part-time day classes partake of all the defects of the “half-timers” educational system. It is not efficient, the wastage is very great, discipline—which is so important a matter in training—is always lax ; there is also the question of the efficient staffing of the technical schools, which is perhaps the most important point of all. Furthermore, industrial concerns could not be efficiently organised, whilst having portion of their staffs in and out in these broken periods. Demands upon industry must be reasonable.

The arithmetical result of multiplying 8 hours  $\times$  40 weeks is the same as that of multiplying 40 hours  $\times$  8 weeks, but in terms of work the result is not the same. The result in the shorter spread-over will always be more valuable ; in Ford’s school, the instruction is given in solid blocks, and not in small fractions.

All trades and businesses have their annual slack periods, there ought not to be any difficulty in utilising both apprentices



and staffs during such periods, leaving the apprentices full-time in the workshops during the busy period.

An American architect journeyed around the world to examine various systems of training in arts and crafts; the conclusion he arrived at, as the result of his tour, was that there was not any system superior to that of the master-apprentice system.<sup>1</sup>

In the master-apprentice system, the apprentice was under the direct tuition of the master craftsman, who taught by example, and imparted knowledge to his pupil as occasion required, and not by formal lectures. We may instance the architectural works of the middle ages as showing how efficient the system must have been. Architecture was always the product of a certain highly-developed state of society.

A sound system of technical education should be founded upon the self-same principles, that is, instructors in all trades, crafts, and professions must be proved masters of their business, and must be in professional practice. Men that are divorced from practice get out of touch with realities, and tend to become too conservative. The notion of putting men with a small knowledge of a trade, and that not of proved professional worth, through a course of training, which is supposed to make them competent teachers for technical schools, just belongs to burlesque. The system has been copied from English technical schools. The Balfour Committee on Industry were constrained to condemn it in the following terms:—"It is very often the case that a keen and promising student, after a successful career in an evening technical school, begins himself to teach evening classes in a subordinate capacity for one or two nights a week. As he gains experience and skill, he does more and more important work in this school, until he comes to be regarded as a permanent part-time member of the teaching staff. Such men as this are freely employed in technical schools. Although they usually bring great energy and intelligence to their task, they have often studied only a narrow range of

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<sup>1</sup> cf. Kahn, *op. cit.*

subjects. In many cases they have taught in only one school, and tend to base their methods on those of their own instructors ; as a result, their teaching lacks the breadth and resourcefulness that come from a wide range of studies and varied experience."<sup>1</sup>

In support of this it is significant to find that the Rural Industries Bureau in England, which is seeking to reconstruct rural England, send out "Technical experts recruited from professional craftsmen and *not* from specialised school-trained instructors . . . into the villages to give advice and practical demonstration."—(*The Observer*, January 17th, 1937).

The whole organising and supervising staff of a technical school, or of the administration governing technical schools, should have passed through a period of professional practice in trade or industry and should, therefore, be thoroughly acquainted with industrial and commercial practice. This is the procedure in the best continental schools. Already millions have been mis-spent, and hundreds of lives used up, to no purpose, simply because we have been working without reference to any standards. Youth does not object to work, what it does object to, and what corrodes its soul, is injustice. The present system of entry to, and training in industry, is grossly unjust; it is very difficult in after-life to eradicate the impression of an injustice inflicted in youth.

To help out the Vocational Education Act, there was passed the Apprenticeship Act, 1931. The machinery of this Act was imported from South Africa by an English official.<sup>2</sup> One of the admirable things observed in South Africa, by this official, is that "every child in the Union is card-indexed" just like a book in a circulating library, which has a particular place on a particular shelf, and should always be sought for there. Such a tidy system would hamper our movements very much : for our full development we need liberty.

<sup>1</sup> cf. *Factors in Industrial and Commercial Efficiency*. H.M. Stationery Office, May, 1927, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Report Technical Education Commission, p. 174.



The Apprenticeship Act is, in many respects, quite unsuitable to our needs ; there are many hindrances which such an Act should sweep away, by having embodied in it certain minimum conditions. It is necessary to declare, that given the requisite educational qualifications, entrance to *all* trades and businesses in the Saorstát is open to *all* : this is a requisite for a democratic country, not to speak of a Christian country. Again, need for thorough training in industry demands that there should be a sufficiency of competent instructors, in all branches of industry ; this requires that a number of apprenticeship vacancies should be reserved for applicants who might desire to enter from our secondary schools or colleges. Our historic background demands that there should be more rigidity in such an Act ; to hand over such a loose Act to the type of Committee that has been set up to administer it, means that progress will be so slow as to be scarcely noticeable.

The Act is administered under the authority of the Minister of Industry and Commerce, and by Sec. 26, the carrying out of the training of apprentices under the Act lies with the Minister of Education. Apprenticeship Committees may make representations to the Minister of Education, who may make further representations to the Vocational Education Committee to do so and so ; here we have circumlocution, with the attendant confusion and loss of time. All matters relating to the welfare of apprentices should be administered by one authority. Wages and hours are not the most important matters in relation to apprenticeship. Sec. 26 (2) of the Act provides for the attendance of apprentices at courses of instruction held within a distance of three miles from the place of employment. Supposing that the place where an apprentice is employed is fifty yards beyond three miles from where the course is being held, what happens ? Is it in contemplation to divide up districts like a chessboard, and set down in each area, an institute, so that in an area like the Borough of Dublin there might be half a dozen

such institutes, all dealing, and at the same time, with one particular trade. Such courses could never get beyond the mere elements, and would, therefore, be useless. The enforcement of technical education according to Vocational Act, Sec. 79, cannot be applied to those over eighteen years of age, so that it is not seemingly contemplated to bring the apprentice through a progressive course, right up to and through the higher stages of his craft, which are the essential stages. We cannot find indications of any programme being formulated for the post-apprenticeship period.

It is the same story again—only primary education for workers. If we are to improve our industrial conditions, there must be a mass attack in any area on any particular industry or upon all industries in that area, and this attack must be carried through all stages of apprenticeship.

Another objectionable feature of this Apprenticeship Act is that the Committees under the Act shall pay tuition fees for apprentices. Our experience has been that the Irish people have always and are still quite prepared to pay for anything they receive. They have no wish to be pauperised. Apprentices should be paid wages on the basis that they will subsequently have to pay fees towards their training. We don't want this character destroying provision of free tuition for wage earners which tends to produce the semi-slave mind.

Before concluding, we might point out, that in the period 1780–1800 many industries were revived in, or introduced to, Ireland. This industrial activity was due to financial assistance granted by the Parliament. When, after the Union, this assistance was withdrawn, the various industries rapidly declined, not merely owing to the withdrawal of financial support, but also because industrial knowledge was not sufficiently deep-seated: it had never struck root in the country because the people in general were excluded by not having access to any system of thorough training.

S. J. MURRAY



# WILLIAM ORPEN : A TRIBUTE

By SEAN KEATING

WILLIAM ORPEN was a born painter, and showed signs of his ability so soon that his sensible parents, in whom he was fortunate, encouraged him to follow his vocation from the time he was eleven years old. Few people know what they want to do at that age, and fewer still are encouraged to do it.

Orpen was spared the waste of time that is involved in the conventional attitude towards education. He went straight to what he wanted to do, and did it all his life with all the vigour, decision and originality that are the qualities of greatness. He had the faculty to bring all his power of attention (which was enormous) to bear on any problem, and to go at once to the heart of things. While still young he had, by diligent work, accumulated such a mass of experience, and so much judgment and manual dexterity, that he could paint as fast as he thought. What he observed seemed to go in through his eyes, be analysed and arranged by his brain, and written down with inevitable rightness by his unerring hand, as one complicated movement of his will. He painted at an incredible speed without alterations or erasures, and then, if it was not exactly what he wanted, he simply wiped it out and began again—but that was seldom. That is why his work is spontaneous, fresh and clean. That is the secret of his quality. He loved paint itself, and would say : “ Wouldn’t you like to eat it ? ” He taught that sufficient paint to create the illusion of light and shade, of tone and colour was enough, and laughed at “ touch,” “ impasto,” “ heureux sâleté,” and, to use his own words, “ all that sort of tosh.” He knew how to draw exquisitely with the point, whether with a brush or a piece of chalk or a lead pencil. And, again, to use his own words : “ Either you can draw or you can’t, and

that's all there is to it." This mental clarity and hatred of evasion led, as time went on, to the extraordinary breadth, simplicity and conciseness of his later work ; the method sinks entirely into the background, and what the picture says is as forcible and laconic as emphatic and as authoritative as the shot of a pistol.

Orpen's work is the product of a great intellect in conflict with a great task ; of the innumerable angles from which he attacked ; his faculty to absorb and digest the processes of his predecessors and recreate in his own work something entirely new. And yet in contact with the classical tradition of faultless drawing, and truthful and naturalistic tone and colour.

Looking at his later work, no one could say whence he derived. He was completely integrated, he had a personal point of view behind his acute observation. His was an attitude begotten of his experience ; not injected in youth, nor founded on complacency, for he was a sceptic—alone in his soul. He could not, and would not, accept claptrap, no matter how dignified by general acceptance. That he was an endless seeker is shown in his work, and anybody who is interested can trace the development of his method through all its stages. He never fumbled, and, even in his experiments, he paints clearly, and with a purpose.

Imagine the resources that lay behind thirty years' of continual output of high quality : portraits, subject pictures, decorative compositions, endless exquisite studies in preparation—never repeating himself, never stale, never meretricious, never painting to please anyone but Orpen.

He must have been a strange little boy of twelve. One of the things he told me sticks in my head as a perfect illustration of the uncommon mixture of commonsense, practicality and imaginative resource that was Orpen. He said that when the long day of grinding work in the antique class was over, he used to be so exhausted that he could not walk, so he made a bargain with an old cabman to drive him home every evening.



I should like to have been present at that deal. The drawings done from the antique at that time give promise of the future master. The system of teaching was entirely formal and academic. The ideal drawing was to be coldly correct—inflexible and unfeeling in outline. There was no insistence on the movement or gesture, no dramatic lighting—nothing that could not be done better by a camera. But Orpen, being a genius, survived this, and even profited by it. And in some strange way these soulless exercises became, under the hands of the boy, something that smelt of Nature, whom he worshipped all his life.

At twenty he was working in London, at the Slade School. There he painted a picture for some competition: "The Play Scene in Hamlet." What a picture from a boy . . . Something of Hogarth, something of Daumier, something of Velasquez, something of Rembrandt, something of——what? One analyses the picture and the influences evaporate, and leave the quality of greatness. Orpen at twenty-one was a self-conscious great man who knew what he wanted to say. But, since he was Irish, and middle-class, he distrusted his native language, or perhaps he did not feel that he had a native language. And so he does not know whether he will speak English or Spanish, Dutch or French. And that is the disadvantage that handicaps artists of our race. We have no background and no tradition. But later Orpen invented an idiom for himself, at once individual and universal, acceptable to the student and to the man in the street. Speaking in this clear and intensely personal language, what a range of subjects did he not display? Take, for example, the Mother and Child. The gentle, lovely mother presses the little tender, gleaming body, rosy from the bath against her heart. One says to oneself: That is what a mother feels. Then turn to the War pictures. The smash and stink. The green slime in the bottom of the trench. The pitiful shattered corpses, dismembered, flattened, swollen, hung in fantastic arabesques, in tattered festoons of burnt rags, on splintered

trees, and nightmare tangles of rusty wire. The prisoners driven mad with lice—brooding in cages, scratching their dirty wounds. The bedraggled, weary soldiers, loaded down with pots, pans, packs, picks, shovels, saucepans, rifles, rockets and God knows what, sitting with downcast heads in seas of rotten mud. And all this awfulness shown with a terrifying impersonality, with clean colour, and mathematical exactitude. An austere and pitiless statement, a crushing reply to the pronouncements of the Biological Necessitarians, the disciples of the late Mr. Kipling, the chauvinist, and the apologists for war. This is the seamy, not to say the lousy, side. Here are no gallant fellows, charging in formation, no colours flying, no rearing horses and flashing sabres, no moderately wounded in the foreground, raising themselves gracefully on one elbow to salute the flag borne by a white-haired colonel. But no one who has seen these pictures can have any illusions about the glories of war. Orpen saw the war as an affair of "other ranks," but when it comes to the Generals it is worse—faces of arrogant schoolboys, faces of men of pleasure, faces of men of intrigue, old men, and men who have never grown up. Having looked at these faces, one needs no official historian to tell him the story of Gallipoli, of Loos, of Ypres and the Somme. And why five years of mechanical butchery ended in a stalemate.

Then turn to the innumerable portraits of women, exquisitely sensitive and delicate, painted with tenderness and understanding, ranging from the exotic Lady Sassoon to the vigorous Dame Madge Kendal. Then look at the portraits of men. A panorama of the English world—a Forsyte Saga in paint. And all incomparably designed in arrangement and colour—noble like the people of Van Dyck, human like the people of Frans Hals, sophisticated like the people of Goya, assured and well-bred like the people of Raeburn.

I will try to give an impression of Orpen as I knew him. He was a little man—square-shouldered, broad-chested, robust, quick, alert. He had a remarkable head, noble, severe, almost



ugly ; a little bit of the stage-Irishman type, except for the lustrous, piercing eyes and noble, finely finished skull. He dressed in the most conventional way—bowler hat, morning coat, pepper-and-salt trousers. He was very vain of his feet, which were extremely small and beautifully shaped. He always wore the most exquisitely-made shoes. He was particular to be perfectly turned out, fashionable—but neither a dandy nor a fop. He looked like a lawyer or a surgeon. His speech was very quick and staccato. He loved to abbreviate until it was difficult to understand him. He was various and inconsistent in his conversation—hated to be contradicted, loved to be courted and admired, whilst despising those who courted him—and they were many. He said once of certain people : “ If I spat on the floor they’d cut out the piece and hang it on the wall, and forget me in a fortnight.” His approach to people was like his attitude to his work—simple and direct. He detested elaborators, complicators and pompous people. To deflate a wind-bag or a snob with a single deadly remark was his delight. He loathed the activities of the official mind, and preached and practised the superiority of works over words. All sorts of people loved him. He was kind and simple ; generous and friendly ; unspoilt by success. He could meet people on their own ground, and talk to them about their affairs, sincerely and without condescending. He was extraordinarily charitable, and hundreds of foolish, unhappy and unlucky people had reason to thank God for him. He had hosts of friends and acquaintances, but I imagine that he was a lonely man in his heart. I do not think that he was happy in London. He once said : “ Every decent man in London has to be drunk by seven o’clock.” He also said : “ The English are not amusing when sober—still less when drunk.” He loved and practised all kinds of skill and dexterity, and was never content to do anything moderately well. He could not bear to sit still. He would start some game, or go somewhere—or play pranks like a schoolboy. He loved noise and horseplay, and would wrestle

and box like a madman. There was a volcanic element in him which was terrifying at times. He was punctual and orderly in his habits, but recklessly extravagant with money. There was an imp of mischief in him. He never restrained his tongue, and would tell the most ludicrously funny and outrageously malicious stories, so that his listeners, shocked into silence for a moment, would explode in roars of laughter. When first I met him I thought him peremptory and harsh. There was an immense disparity of accomplishment and experience between us. But as I came to know him and learn from him, I grew to respect and love him extremely. And now, thinking of him dispassionately (at least as dispassionately as I am able) at the distance of a number of years, I come to the conclusion that *he was* the best and kindest of men.

Why, it may be asked, did such a man go to the War?

In 1916, when I had to leave London, I said to him before I went: "Come back with me to Ireland. This war may never end. All that we know of civilisation is done for. It is the beginning of the end. I am going to Aran. There is endless painting to be done. Leave all this. *You* don't believe in it. But he said: "No. Everything I have I owe to England. I am unknown in Ireland. It was the English who gave me appreciation and money. This is their war, and I have enlisted. I won't fight, but I'll do what I can."

Such was William Orpen as he appeared to me. I doubt very much whether anybody really knew him. Of such people only two or three appear in a generation, and there is no standard by which to judge them. I have been accused of hero worship in regard to Orpen. It is a crime to which I plead guilty. Whom should one worship if not heroes? I realise that there was another side to his character, and if anyone wishes to present that aspect, let him who will be Devil's Advocate.

SEAN KEATING



## LA CHANSON DU MAL-AIME

Tráthnóna ceoiḡ éadtruim a's mé i lonnḡain  
Táinig cladaire ós dom dail  
Aḡus ḡnóis air mar ḡnóis mo ḡráda  
O'féac sé orm ḡo ḡéar am' buaidreacḡ  
ḡur dallas raḡarc mo súl ón náir.

Do cas sé suas port feadḡaile  
A lámá 'na pócaib a's mé á leanacḡ  
Ba dóis leat orainn idir na dtiḡte  
ḡur i mbun na Ruacḡ-mara sḡoilte 'bíomar,  
ḡurb é an t-arm eabracḡ 's mise an forann.

Ma's ruo nár tḡas fíorḡráo duit-se  
Ma's ruo nac tú an t-aonḡracḡ aonḡa :  
Na tonnta brice seo ḡo dtuitio !  
Is mise ártorí na h-Éisipe  
Is mise a sluaḡ-san 's a d'riphuir-céile.

Aḡ cúinne sráide do bí tré teine  
Aḡ uile sḡoilse éadḡan tiḡe,  
Créacḡta an ceoiḡ aḡ sileacḡ folá,  
Caointe ar élos ó lár na tiḡe,  
Do léim bean aḡ tiḡ tabairne amacḡ.

Aḡus ḡnóis uirtí mar ḡnóis mo ḡráda  
Mar ba léir dom ó n-a érot neamḡdaonḡa  
Ón ḡcréacḡtlorg bí ar a bráḡaio  
A's i ar meisce sa nóimeacḡ céadḡa  
'n ar aomuiḡeas féin ḡur breáḡ an ḡráo.

Ar teacḡ tar n-aís 'n a oileán dútcáis  
Fé d'eire na ndeire d'ullios eadḡnuide,  
O'aicniḡ amáin a sean-cú é  
'S a bean aḡ feiteam leis do fuair sé,  
Táipis breáḡ aici 's i á fiḡe.

B'adubinn do rí-fear Sacontáile  
Nuair d'eiriḡ tuirseacḡ dá cat-buadāib  
Aḡus ḡo b'fuair sé arís liacḡbān i  
A súla laḡ on nḡráo 's ón súl  
'S an fiacḡ le na taobḡ dá bogfáisḡeacḡ.

TÁNAODAR 1 NGLEIC, NA TAIÖBSÍ NEIMÖILSE,  
SUR CUIMÍN LIOM AN DÁ RÍG SÉANMAR SIN,  
TAIÖBSE AN GRÁDA BRÉAGDAÍG, TAIÖBSE AN TÍ  
GO DTUGAIM FÓS GRÁD DÍ,  
'S NAC IAD ANSÓS MO ÉROIÖE ISTÍG !

BUNAÖAS IFRINN AN CUIÑA TÁ ORM.  
NEAM AN DEARMÁIO DOM GHIÖE GO N-OSCLAIO !  
GEÖBAIOÍS BÁS LE DÚIL 'NA PÓIS,  
RÍGTE AN TSAOĞAIL, NA TAOISÍG BOÖTA,  
'DÍOLPAÖ A N-AINMNEACA 'NA CÖMAIR.

MÉ SAN ALLÖD IM GEIMREAO-SUAN  
O ! TAGAÖ GRIAN NA CÁISCE AR AIS  
DO GORAO MO ÉROIÖE TÁ NÍOS OIREAMLA  
NÁ DÁCÁD MÁIRTÍR AN TSEBAIST,  
DOM GORAO FÉIN, TÁIM LÁN BRÚIGTE.

LONG BRÉAG ÍSEAÖ TÚ, OC A CUIMNE !  
NAC LEÖR DÚINN BEIT AG TRIALL AR MUIR  
SA TAOIO TÁ CÖ SALAC LE N-ÍÖE ANN  
A'S NAC LEÖR DÚINN A BEIT AR FAN  
O MUIÖE LAE GO NÖIN DÖILGEASAC !

ADIEU A GRÁD BRÉIGE 'TÁ DÖD' MEASCAÖ  
TRÉ'N MNAOI 'LAGDUIGEAS A RÉIM IM' CUIMNE,  
TRÍD AN TÍ DÖ BAINEAÖ DÍOM  
SA GEARMÁIN AN BLIADAIN GAB TARAINN ;  
NÍ FEICFIO MÉ GO DEÖ ARÍS Í.

A SÍOG NA SPÉIRE, A DRIFÚIR SOILLSEAC  
SRUTÁN BÁN TIRE-CANAAN  
'S CORP BÁN LEANNÁN, AN LEANFAM NÁR  
SNAMAIÖCÍÖ MARÖ PÉ LÁN-OCAOIDEAÖT  
DO TRIALL PÉ DÖIN RÉALTÖUIÖEAN EILE ?

IS CUIMÍN, IS CUIMÍN LIOM BLIADAIN EILE  
DÍ SÉ 'NA MUIÖE LAE ABRÁIN  
CAN MÉ MO SEARC, CAN MÉ MO SOILBIR,  
DE GUT BRÉAG FÍR DO CAN MÉ'N GRÁD  
'S AN BLIADAIN FÉIN AR TÍ IONMÁINE.

AMRÁN LE GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE: O. Ó DOBAILEIN  
D'AISTRÍG Ó'N BFRAINNCÍS.

# THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE

By EDWARD SHEEHY

I WOULD talk of this education. I would talk of this craze for learning that is the consuming passion of the sons and daughters of the land and whose fulfilment is the proud boast of the local spokesmen in parish cumanns, of the proud father in the local pub, of the councillor in his council and the member in his Dail. What is behind it all? It is there and the elaborate architecture of the systems is there to put it into effect. Island of scholars if we cannot well yet be the island of saints. It is the will of the people, garnished with irrefutable catchwords like: "equality of opportunity," "no longer the stigma of illiteracy can brand the Irish child," "the light of knowledge." All that came out of nineteenth century optimism on the verge of the millenium; knowledge was to make man wise; reason would dispel for ever those baser passions that led men in hordes to leap at one another's throats. Sweetness and light, and over all, the parliament of man, the federation of the world! Rational life for the rational man. Only it did not wash. Reason worked even less well than the mere unbridled passions. But we are still riding the hobby horse of education, forgetting that the original ideal at the root of that experiment has been more than disproved long ago.

But public bodies, deliberative or legislative, rarely question the validity or the worth or even the sanity of the ideas they work with. Such bodies are essentially democratic; they reflect exactly the will and aggregate desire of the community that appoints them. No man can blame them for leading the people astray; in point of fact, they don't lead anybody anywhere. They live in a dust rising from the conflict of tremendous distinctions between tweedledum and tweedledee. Any suggestion that the whole, or part, of their activities might



be of questionable sanity is abhorrent to them—and rightly so, for they are doing the will of the people, these honest, self-sacrificing and painstaking public servants, these proven patriot politicians.

Now the conglomerate mass of all these organisations is all for education—and we have education in huge, efficiently and compulsorily administered doses. Now there is a real and apparent cause for all this. The apparent cause, or much protested, in fact, too much protested cause, is the belief that education is good for the mind and the soul and that it keeps the body out of the more violent forms of harm; that it produces better, finer, nobler citizens; that it sublimates the primitive savagery that would otherwise spend itself in donkey-beating, wife-beating, window-breaking, into meritorious meditation on the humanities and the eternal verities; that it brings the youth into contact with great minds, world poetry and world philosophy. And, lastly, education is the mark of a gentleman, enables him to distinguish himself from the beast and proletarian and, moreover, it equips the young people for the business of life. This last approaches the real and democratic reason, of which more anon.

Educationalists and earnest, painstaking public servants generally argue with their souls: the world's great thinkers, poets and philosophers, men whose greatness it is impossible to ignore, had some things in common; they all could read and write; they all had a great deal of information about a number of subjects. Therefore, they conclude, if we ordain that all youths and maidens learn to read and write, if we equip them with large stocks of information, they will become wise men and women. They forget that the knowledge of a great mind is as the rose growing on the tree. The knowledge of our education is a paper gaud tied to the branch. What is wrong with the modern world is that knowledge has outgrown the power to organise or synthesise it—has overwhelmed honesty of spirit with a spate of irrelevant facts.

Nor does education, as we know it, civilise, refine or elevate. The University undergraduate is the most uncivilised of beings during that time when the decrees of educationalists are wreaking their full and untrammelled will upon him. His behaviour is comparable only to that of the nomadic savage recently enfranchised with the coarser delights of civilisation. Only under severe and sustained economic pressure does he graduate into the decorous doctor, the suave surgeon, the barrister, the civil servant. The change is wrought overnight, but not by the *katharsis* of Euripides or Shakespeare.

The claim that the youth is brought into contact with the rich storehouse of the world's poetry and philosophy is the purest tosh. All the extracts from all the poets that appear in the school text books are selected for their vacuity, their innocuous prettiness, the suppression of the torment and conflict that constitutes the greatness of these men. Burns' wee mousie, Shelley's skylark, daffodils and daisies, all very well in themselves ! But do these people contemplate introducing the youth or maiden at some stage to the tumult of *The Cenci*, to *The Cotter's Saturday Night* ? Perhaps these argue that the young mind is too delicate and sensitive a plant to weather these torrid blasts of passion and anarchism, of torment and despair at man's inhumanity to man, that characterise the greatest European literature from the very threatening of this era. Or is it argued that in these lyrics is the pure metal, wrought when the poor bewildered poet escaped momentarily from the horrid meshes of doubt ? Is it hoped that some day the educated mind will be strong enough to advance without danger ? I fear not. Only traditional ignorance or traditional dishonesty would claim it. The poor misguided dupes, adults who should be out of the educational hothouse, are not considered fit to stand the shock of a modern Irish novel that suggests that this our everyday life is not rooted in the soundest moral and ethical principles. And if this goes on, fifty years hence educationalists will be fishing in the maelstrom of to-day's banned

literature for arty and innocuous bits to dish up to the adolescent minds of our grandchildren.

What really happens is that the youth graduates through the reading of the daily papers to a field of information that is inspired in equal parts by mendacity, maudlin sentimentality, party bias, the necessity of covering 16 seven-column pages with one column's worth of news, the necessity of catering for the lowest possible average in taste and intelligence, the necessity of courting advertisers, however unmoral, unsocial, unethical their trade.

Some earnest councillor will tell you glibly that education trains the mind, develops the faculties. But, you don't train anything or develop anything except to some specific end. Train it for what? To tot up figures and ledgers; to write: "Dear Sir—With reference to yours of the 15th ult., I beg to state . . ." But you don't need all this elaborate fake machinery of syllabuses and curricula to do that. You don't need to cram a boy's mind with enough information to equip a Duns Scotus to do that. It could be done much more simply. But, then, this machinery serves another purpose—of which more anon. Also there is a middle-class prejudice in favour of correct grammar, of knowing that Brian Boru was not a joke in a pantomime or that Lambert Simnel was not the middle-weight champion of Wessex. But this is another fake—the fake demanded by snobbery.

The system is there; it is willed there. No one dare deprive the people of it. If a certain healthy-minded instinct in the boy would prefer to make aeroplanes or dam streams or play at cowboys and red Indians, it is well-known that he is not old enough to know what is good for him, and the educationalists are and do, and his parents do and the elders gathered in their councils do. He must be educated. Every farmer will tell you it is a great thing and a damn fine thing for the country. Pious old ladies, shuttered in oleographed back parlours, will tell you of the dreadful illiteracy of the Spanish peasant: "no wonder,



etc." But behind all this window-dressing the whole thing is a racket, the soundest most surely fool-proof racket there is, sanctioned and fostered by the will of the whole people. Let us see whither this will leads. Thus : parents love their offspring. Next to begetting them, their strongest desire is to see them succeed. Men look for ease and security without continual strain; if they have it not themselves they desire it for their children. Now, it is notorious that the unproductive worker is always entrenched in a position of greater security than the productive. The farmer sees it in the city, in the world of shops, offices, government buildings. Even if wise, beyond the lure of the unknown and glittering, to know that only a number can have this success, he knows that any boy or girl has a fighting chance of entering the havens where the economic struggle is over for life, the civil service, the bank. He may know that many fall short and are caught in the precariousness of offices and shops and capitalist employment generally—but every one has a fighting chance. Now it is obvious that all the sons of all the farmers, of all the bricklayers, masons, carpenters and factory workers, cannot at one swoop be absorbed by this clerical machine. There must be some just and democratic means of selecting candidates for the reward. Hence, the controllers of the machine devise the examination system. What we call education is the series of obstacles which the community tacitly consents to place in the way of preferment. And, since all collective activities that are based on greed and rapacity demand a coat of nobility, the air is full of claptrap about enlightenment and the blessings of knowledge. At bottom this protested thirst for knowledge is nothing more than a rooted belief that work in shops and banks and offices is better, nobler, more worthy of respect than work in fields and workshops. And it is, to judge it by the only standards we have left : money, clothes and leisure.

Now even the most imbecile of economists knows that the one really essential function of a community is the production

of food, clothes, shelter and heat. On these things depend the physical life of the society ; questions of administration, culture, learning, pomp and circumstance come a bad second. But we see that the operating ideal of a people protesting sanity is away from productive labour, away from work proper and towards a parasitic overseership and tallydom. In the end the tail wags the dog—when the dog is dead. Apart from this the whole system of education means nothing more than a harmful stuffing of young brains with predigested information, helped on by rivalry between individuals, schools, helped and goaded by the parental craze to see their young in positions of recognised respect and security.

What the bosses want or what the government wants is not the educated man or woman. That is precisely what they don't want. What they want is the craven broken-spirited pen-slave, who can do a large amount of repetitive penwork in a given time. a bank clerk to whom the figures £1,000,000 has no social connotation, an executive officer who can administer a hide-bound system without questioning its sanity. The inverted efficiency of the victim is assured by the examination system ; he has given proof of his ability to keep his nose to the unnatural grindstone for years at a time without kicking.

But if by some miraculous chance a man becomes really educated, capable of constructive thinking, capable of rising above the miasma of dope and sentimentality, of critical examination of principles and motives and results, your government or your board of governors or directors ordain that he keep his mouth shut or forfeit the reward. He is discouraged from any efficient part in politics, that is, in the collective deliberation which is supposed to lead to the making of wise and beneficent laws for the control of society. He has a dumb vote only, and too often only a choice between two imbecilities.

Education has not any of these high-sounding benefits that are claimed for it, not anyway that which is the inevitable result of the competitive examination system. A real education,

would seek to train the mind to creation of some kind, to the creation of things, of ideas, of songs, to the enriching of life around it. Human happiness is inseparable from human integrity. Human integrity can be his only who creates. Knowledge of the past is of no value unless it points into the future, unless it be a training to growth. I see no hope for any such thing in the racket that our education has become. Any man that has come out of it with the creative faculty, mental or physical, still left to him, did it by being too strong for the system, by breaking away from it, by being a bad boy, an incorrigible reformatory candidate. Think of the horror of your middle-class parent at the spectacle of his educated son becoming a carpenter or a mason, or, for that matter, anything real. That the child's hands ache for the familiarity of chisels and planes and saws is looked upon as a folly no less than his desire for adventure. Now, the essential thing about man, the thing that distinguishes him from the natural animal, is the creative faculty in him. In so far as he exercises it he is more the man and less the animal. There is no use in pretending that man can ever stop earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. Though, by a highly organised scheme of injustice many are fed without labour, but only on condition that they have power to make somebody sweat for them. But this is good neither for the exploited nor for the exploiter. And this, through the gigantic machinery of capitalist industry, has destroyed the quality of labour and the quality of the product. This is the primary injustice, the root of all social and economic evil.

While man has a body he is inevitably compelled to feed, clothe and keep it sheltered. Any system that turns an undue proportion, and a majority in their hearts, away from direct concern with these things, and into a distant impersonal overseership, is fundamentally unhealthy. For that is what all clerical occupations really are, functions for measuring the work of others for various purposes, but mainly because certain people, known generally as capitalists, live by the work of



others and find it necessary to have it measured. The clerical worker is unconsciously the jackal of the capitalist, whether capitalist government, or capitalist bank, or capitalist trader. He has no concern with things but only with the symbols of things. And the growing locust-swarm of clerical workers, stool-sitters, ledger-slaves, is due to the fact that the intrinsically worthless symbol of work—the bank note—has become more important than work or its product.

What I have tried to show is this : that our whole system of education, however much we may disguise it with the fripperies and the gauds of culture, with blurbs on the dignity of labour, is really no more than the avenue that leads away from any kind of healthy creation and towards an ignoble parasitism.

EDWARD SHEEHY

# THE CHAOS OF THE MIND

## *Reflections of a Tourist in Paris*

THE poem, from which my title is taken, is an exquisite lyric by Michael Roberts, which is included in Mr. Yeats' *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*. It is entitled: "Midnight."

"I have thrown wide my window  
And looked upon the night,  
And seen Arcturus burning  
In chaos, proudly bright.

The powdered stars above me  
Have littered heaven's floor—  
A thousand I remember;  
I saw a myriad more.

I have forgotten thousands,  
For deep and deep between,  
My mind built up the darkness  
Of space, unheard, unseen.

I held my hands to heaven  
To hold perfection there,  
But through my fingers streaming  
Went time as thin as air.

And I must close my window  
And draw a decent blind  
To screen from outer darkness  
The chaos of the mind."

A distinguished critic has singled this poem as the most finished expression of the spirit that runs through Mr. Yeats' anthology. But one might go further and say that it is also an expression of the dominant outlook of our age. For these lines convey that sense of overwhelming confusion which has so decisively influenced the character of the modern world. The heritage to which it succeeded; a heritage of war, of injustices unredressed, of destruction—moral as well as material—did not encourage the easy acceptance of a pre-war scale of values. The new creed of the post-war world was admirable in intention, universal in application, but as its character was ambitious so their achievement demanded a rare measure of patience and foresight. When patience fails—as one regretfully admits it has

partly failed—then an intelligent devotion to an ideal is converted to a blind adherence to an ideology. For the post-war generation is angry ; it is mistrustful of convention ; it has seen the flummery that clothed the old order in Europe torn aside and it has watched the spectacle with an unindulgent eye. Where older men blame the machine, with a fatalism that is all the easier since they know that retrogression is impossible, younger men are acutely conscious of the abysmal failure of human intelligence when confronted with an unexampled opportunity for the enrichment of life. They realise that war meant failure—and that it now remains to retrieve that failure so far as possible. This is no easy task ; and it is unfortunate for the prospect of its fulfilment that those who must undertake it display no great capacity for sustained and determined action. It may be that the men of to-day, intensely conscious of the “chaos of the mind,” are not sufficiently confident of their ability to dispel the confusion that envelops the destiny of civilised man. It may be also that the historian of a later day will write of this generation as being too critical to be constructive.

The disillusion of the modern world is the disillusion of a generation that has sought earnestly for the ideal in art, in politics, in religion, but whose quest has seemed to end in failure. Though scornful of a pre-war world, where men knew they but “lived in motley,” it is a generation that looks back with regret to those periods in history when the mind was raised in intense emotion above the level of material interests, when a vision of what man might achieve seemed so dazzling that the uncertainties of life dissolved as mists before the morning sun. But the visions to which this modern world might have given an intelligent devotion ; the vision of peace on earth won through a sacrifice in war that had ended war, of a new era of social justice, appear so unattainable as to be scarcely worthy of effort. What hope is there of peace founded on armaments unequalled in their capacity for destruction ? What labour for a new and happier state when another shot fired in the sunshine of a summer afternoon in another Sarajevo may well shatter the whole fabric of western civilisation ? So it is with a poignant regret that the creature of this age of disillusion looks back upon the ages of certainty.

Such, at any rate, was the random course of my reflections when, for the first time, I entered the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Here was one of the buildings that are the pride of medieval architecture ; a building at once massive and extraordinarily



elegant, an enduring expression of human labour devoted to the service of an ideal. When I walked across from the banks of the Seine towards the principal facade crowned by the two square towers, and as I entered by an arch decorated by fine, early Gothic carving and surmounted by a line of figures representing the twenty-eight Kings of Israel and Judah, I experienced that vague sense of uneasiness sometimes aroused in surveying the achievements of another age. The building of Notre Dame, begun in the twelfth century, was completed in the thirteenth during the reign of St. Louis. It was medieval in conception, medieval in the balanced beauty of its design and it has survived the changes of war and the ravages of revolution, to excite our admiration to-day. When the human story is told will the distinctive achievements of this age, will the marvels of science compare with the product of medieval devotion?

Then I passed from the fog of a chill November afternoon into a Cathedral dimly lit by lights suspended along the line of Gothic pillars. The vaulted roof was barely visible, for the lights did not disperse the darkness that clung to it. The gloom in which the tops of the pillars were shrouded, in which the altar at the end of the long central aisle dissolved in a shadowy outline, gave an impression at once restful and a little sinister. As I stayed in the Cathedral, not intent on seeing it, but reflecting on the outlook of that age of certainty in which it had been built, I came to understand something of the confidence the builders must have felt in the value of their work. They were certain of the purpose of life; they were not afflicted by the doubts which trouble a wiser—and, I think, a sadder—generation. This assurance of outlook in the middle ages is reflected in the detail as well as in the design of its architecture. In Christchurch Priory a few years ago, crumbling masonry exposed the reverse side of some sculptures upon which otherwise the eye of man could never rest—and, indeed, had not rested for more than five hundred years. Yet the work was as delicate as that in front, thereby giving to the world a fine expression of pride in craftsmanship. The dust of the unknown generations of men who built the medieval Cathedrals lies scattered round them, round Notre Dame, round Christchurch, as round the Rock of Cashel near my home; yet of all who hurry by to-day is there any who gives a thought to these men of a bygone age; to the workers who raised the massive twin towers of Notre Dame, to the artists who carved the beautiful reredos in Christchurch Priory, to the craftsmen who

fashioned the chancel arch in the Chapel, where Cormac M'Carthy, the last king of Munster, takes his lonely rest. Perhaps oblivion is fitting. They did not ask the doubtful gift of personal fame. What they did, for its own sake, they were well content to do.

The whistle of the gendarme blown in angry blasts while in the thickening fog he directs the traffic by l'Hotel de Ville made me more conscious of my surroundings, and my attention was drawn to a new memorial tablet on one of the pillars. The Union Jack was hanging over it. It was inscribed to the million dead of the British Empire who lie buried in French soil. Quite close was another tablet inscribed with the names of the priests of the Archdiocese of Paris, who had perished in the years 1914-18 in the discharge of the duties of their ministry. So the Cathedral of the thirteenth century records the crowning catastrophe of the twentieth. But from the tragedy mankind has learnt so little as to endorse anew the truth of Turgenev's remark, that the most terrible thing is that there is nothing terrible. When another fifty years have passed—a short period in the life of Notre Dame—then these memorials of the first world war, will become, as other historical memorials before them, a subject of conversation between tourists and guides. Time always dims the intensity of emotion. Each day, bringing forth its triumphs and disasters, blurs the memories of yesterday. But, then, to :

“ . . . forgotten things  
Stumble back strangely ; and the ghost of June  
Stands by December's fire, cold, cold ! and puts  
The last spark out.”

I can think of no city more likely than Paris to induce a sense of historical perspective in the mind of the beholder. For almost all the decisive events in the history of France—or, for that matter, of Western Europe—took place on those few acres that lie between the Champs Elysées and the Ile de la Cité. Notre Dame itself has witnessed strange scenes in the turbulent history of Paris since that day, almost seven hundred years ago, when St. Louis entered the Cathedral to receive a pilgrim's scrip and staff on his journey to the Holy Land. In 1270 the body of this ideal king of the age of chivalry lay in state in the Cathedral. It was there, too, that Henry VI, the boy king of England, was crowned king of France. It was there that Henry of Navarre, having decided that Paris was worth a Mass, celebrated his conquest of the city in 1594. It was there that the men of the revolution attempted to substitute

the worship of Reason for Christianity. Strange, indeed, was the inaugural ceremony of the new Religion. In 1793 the Convention decreed the Cult of Reason. Notre Dame became its Temple and a ballet dancer its Goddess. "Demoiselle Candeille, a woman fair to look upon when well rouged, was the first Goddess of Reason." So wrote Carlyle; and he wrote of the procession that went to Notre Dame with "... Reason sitting in her litter in the van, borne—as one judges—by men in Roman costume; escorted by wind-music, red night-caps and the madness of the world. And so straightway, Reason taking her seat upon the high Altar of Notre Dame, the requisite worship or quasi-worship is, say the newspapers, *executed*. It is the first of the feasts of Reason, first Communion Service of the religion of Chaumette." A little later, to be precise, on the 28th Thermidor of the Year III, the *Bonhomme Richard*, a popular revolutionary journal, had written of Notre Dame: "I think it be a very long time before a gold-laced monarch will do honour to God by paying a visit to this Church." Who would not then have agreed? But the reaction was swift. The 28th Germinal of the Year X—that is, Easter Day, 1802—was fixed for the Festival of the Restoration of Religious Worship. On the morning of that day the Great Bell of Notre Dame, after a silence of ten years, rang out full peal. The first Consul, Bonaparte, attended with his colleagues amid the tarnished splendours of a dying republic. Germaine de Stael described the ceremony as an "odious spectacle," while General Delmas, a rough soldier of the Republic, told Bonaparte, "A fine piece of mummery! We only wanted the hundred thousand men who allowed themselves to be killed to put a stop to all that." But the people of Paris were "delirious with joy." And on the 11th Frimaire of the Year XIII (1804), less than ten years after the writer in the *Bonhomme Richard* had penned his prophecy, a gold-laced monarch did do honour to God by paying a visit to Notre Dame. For on that day Napoleon and Josephine Beauharnais were crowned, amid all the pomp of the new Imperial regime. The significance of the scene could not escape the startled congregation, which saw the Emperor snatch the crown from the waiting hands of the Pope and place it haughtily upon his own head.

After Waterloo the restored Bourbons worshipped in Notre Dame until the July days of 1830, when, as Chateaubriand cried in the Chamber of Peers: "the idolatry of a name has been abolished, monarchy is no longer a religion." But this royalist romantic also renewed his allegiance to the fallen



House, saying : "I should be the most despicable of care-takers were I to deny them at the moment when, for the third and last time, they are treading the path of exile." Twenty-four years later the third Napoleon, a man who amid all the vicissitudes of the Bonaparte family, retained implicit faith in his destiny, an Emperor whom diplomatists described as the Sphinx of the Tuilleries, whom Bismarck called the Man of Sin, reached the spectacular climax of his career when he was married in Notre Dame to Eugenie de Montijo. Seventeen years later the Cathedral was nearly destroyed in the revolt of the Commune which followed the fall of the Second Empire.

Few Cathedrals, indeed, can have witnessed so remarkable a succession of events. Perhaps it is but this association with historic scenes, perhaps it is no more than the mellow enchantment of age and of that illusion of security to which distance alone can lend reality, that gave one tourist a new understanding of the spirit of the Middle Ages. For here, standing under the vaulted basilica of the Capet kings, the visitor may catch some glimpse of the grace and piety of an age that has been and can be no more. But though he may understand in Notre Dame what perhaps he did not well understand before, yet he will not feel the melancholy charm of a vanished world ; he will not experience the nostalgia that afflicts the wanderer when, in the sad serenity of evening, he sees the rays of an autumn sun light up the ruins of Beaulieu, and plays among the leaves of burnished beech that are fluttering to their grave in this quiet glade of the New Forest ; nor will he be reminded of the doom that time exacts of all the works of man, as will a traveller driving late on the Dublin road when the moon throws up the Rock of Cashel in bold silhouette before him, and the ruins of the Cathedral and of the Palace of the Munster kings stand out in proud and lonely eminence against the pale, night sky :

"A place as holy and enchanted  
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted."

To-day the tradition of life handed down by generations has been questioned, perhaps finally broken ; and so it is only out of the past that we can hear "the solemn note of certainty." It may well be that modern civilization, in neglecting this tradition, will yet achieve a mode of life in comparison with which the restricted outlook of the past will seem but a safeguard imposed by a society just emerging from barbarism. But we, who are conscious of living in an age of transition, are divided in allegiance between past and future. We are tempted

alternately to dismiss in an easy phrase the accumulated wisdom of the ages, or to lament a change, probably beneficial, and assuredly inevitable, because we fear to adventure. Yet history teaches the decisive lesson—that intellectual and physical adventure are a condition of all progress.

Certainly the old world lies beyond recall. It died in the streets of Paris in the years that followed 1789. "The eighteenth century mind," wrote J. L. and Barbara Hammond, "was a unity, an order: it was finished and it was simple. All literature and art that really belong to the eighteenth century are the language of a little society of men and women who moved within one set of ideas; who understood each other; who were not tormented by anxious and bewildering problems; who lived in comfort and, above all, composure." The eighteenth century had interpreted in the light of reason the medieval conception of an ordered life. It was a period that adorned the history of civilization in giving to the world an example of social grace freed from the vices of fanaticism and confusion. The change in outlook from the eighteenth century to our own is a change from serenity to doubt. It may be, as the Romantics claimed, that the serenity of the age of Reason involved the sacrifice of vitality to a barren formalism; it may be, as enthusiasts in every cause affirm, that there was no virtue in a society whose code of manners questioned the good taste of enthusiasm in any cause; it may be, as the Marxist dialectic propounds, that such a society could flourish only through the exploitation of the many for the enjoyment of the few. Some of these indictments are true, certainly in part, but it is equally true that the charm of that civilization which perished in the French Revolution, in all the elegance of its declining days, haunts us in this age of great dreams and small achievements. One recalls that when Shelley was at Lausanne in 1816 he visited Gibbon's house at Ouchy. "We were shown the decayed summer house where he finished his history, and the old acacias on the terrace from which he saw Mont Blanc after having written the last sentence. My companion gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy in my heart for mortal things. Gibbon had a cold and unimpassioned heart." To Shelley, Gibbon appeared the embodiment of the heartless society of the Age of Reason. But, Byron, who was his companion on this visit to Ouchy, had wider sympathies—

"Lernan ! these names are worthy of thy shore  
Thy shore of names like these ! . . ."

And who would not pick those acacia leaves to-day ? Yet on the balance the Revolution which shattered the composure of the eighteenth century mind ultimately brought great benefits to European society.

Looking out from the Louvre over the Tuileries gardens and the Place de la Concorde, to where in the distance l'Arc de Triomphe crowns the Champs Elysées, the eye surveys the scene of almost all the memorable events of the tragic, yet fruitful, years of revolution. It is hard to imagine scenes of wild disorder where all is now so orderly. From the box-bordered flower-beds laid out in intricate and elaborate design by l'Arc du Carrousel, from the white statues and the trees that scarce dare to show a branch out of place in the Tuileries' gardens, to the fountains playing in the Place de la Concorde, to the myriad lamps in the Champs Elysées that light up the Parisian night, all is symmetrical and formal. For the scene of the greatest of revolutions has become the finest civilised vista in the world.

It is now almost an act of courage for a historian to admit those innumerable personal tragedies that meant so much to contemporaries. For in the course of time the revolution has come to be regarded purely as an event with significant causes and far-reaching consequences. But the few last leaves of autumn that lay scattered along the paths in the Tuileries' gardens reminded me of that August morning in 1792, when King Louis and his family left the Tuileries Palace for the last time to walk across to the Assembly. As they walked the Dauphin amused himself by kicking the leaves that were already scattered along the paths. "They are falling very early this year," said the King. He was not destined to see the young leaves in the Tuileries gardens again. That August day witnessed, too (as it seems to me), the most tragic event of the revolution—an event more tragic in character than the death of the royal family, than the execution of the Gironde or of Danton, than the September massacres or even than the reign of Terror, and than that execution which ended it—when Robespierre, the doctrinaire defender of government by a terrorist system, was brought to the scaffold amid the curses of the people, his broken jaw bound in dirty linen. "The executioner," wrote an eye-witness, "after he had tied him to the plank, roughly tore off the bandage on his face. He uttered a roar like a dying tiger, that was heard all over the square."



Robespierre had sent over 1,300 victims to the scaffold, Danton and the Gironde, the King and the émigrés had played, or aspired to play, an active part in guiding the destinies of France. But the Swiss guard who perished by the Tuileries on August 10th, 1792, were but mercenary soldiers of a foreign King.

The crowds collected early on the morning of August 10th. King Louis was roused to go down and review the National Guard in the Place du Carrousel. The sun was bright, and even in the early morning there was a foretaste of the sultry heat of that August day. The King moved heavily along the National Guard not finding one inspiring word: in front of each company he repeated the same phrase: "I love the National Guard." An observer wrote: "I see him yet as he passed along our front, silent, careworn, with his swaying walk, seeming to say to us: 'all is lost.' And the gunners cried: 'Down with the King! Down with the fat . . .'" So Louis XVI, who shocked the American Ambassador by his heavy indifference to events, spent the last morning of the Monarchy. To the cries of the gunners, he made no reply. He was back in the Tuileries at half-past seven. A few hours later the Royal Family were induced to take refuge in the Assembly. The Swiss Guard were left to defend the Tuileries. There they withstood the attacks of revolutionary Paris. But the King, pressed by deputies, signed a note ordering the Swiss to cease firing and to proceed to the Manège. They obeyed. In a moment they were pursued and massacred—killed to the last man in the Palace and in the Tuileries gardens. "Oh, ye staunch Swiss, ye gallant gentlemen in black, for what a cause come ye to spend and to be spent?" The epitaph of Carlyle deserves recall: "Surely few things in the history of carnage are painfuller! What ineffaceable red streak, flickering so sad in the memory is that, of this poor column of Swiss; dispersing into blackness and death. Honour to you brave men; honourable pity, through long times! Not martyrs were ye; and yet almost more. He was no king of yours, this Louis; and he forsook you like a king of shreds and patches: ye were but sold to him for some poor sixpence a day, yet would ye work for your wages, keep your plighted word. The work was now to die; and ye did it. Honour to you, O kinsmen!"

In the last century and a half, Paris has been a city of revolution. Even a comparative stranger is reminded everywhere of events which are part of the history of Europe. The Parisian, interested in the history of his city, must, indeed, possess a rich

store of incident garnered from the experience of revolutions. To me a street named La Rue Boissy d'Anglas by the Elysée Palace, recalls a man of the centre who played an unheroic but not unimportant part in the overthrow of Robespierre in Thermidor of the Year III. But to the Parisian such casual encounters must arouse recollections of strange tales of the years of revolution—1789-99, of 1830, of 1848, of 1870-1, and of February, 1934. As I walked along by the Seine on a Sunday late in November, some reality was lent to the thought of revolutions by the gendarmes gathered in force by the Chamber of Deputies and by soldiers fully armed drawn up by lorries with running engines at certain strategic points along the river. For M. Salengro, Minister of the Interior, had committed suicide during the week as a result of slander directed against him by the Right Wing Press. On the Sunday, M. Blum delivered the funeral oration. In the Place de la Madeleine, royalist newsmongers were shouting with even more than their usual aggressiveness: "L'Action Francaise," "l'Emancipation Nationale." There was excitement, but no disorder.

There are many who profess to see in the recurrent revolutions of recent years the outward and visible sign of that "chaos of the mind" that is the peculiar affliction of the modern world. Such a diagnosis, lacking as it does in a sense of historical perspective, is misleading. As at all times the world has always been troubled, so life has always been, more or less, insecure for the large majority. Rome is always burning—but in other ages fiddling seemed a not unworthy occupation. For then people were less conscious through isolation or indifference of ills which they did not themselves suffer. But to-day, science, in diminishing the size of the world, has increased our anxieties, in enlarging our knowledge it has added to our responsibilities. Is it any wonder that our outlook is chaotic when we are confronted with one vast conglomeration of the world's apparently incurable ills? Security is now indivisible. The Norman knight or the Marcher Lord could undertake an adventure in Sicily or a foray in Wales undisturbed by the thought of possible reactions in every capital from London to Tokio, to Washington. But that did not make the world more secure. It meant merely that the problem of peace in the Middle Ages was different in kind from what it is to-day.

The catastrophe of one world war has converted one generation at last to the profoundly pessimistic view that the increase of man's power through the progress of scientific inventions presents dangers that outweigh its benefits. Such pessimism, however

understandable, is scarcely the quality most needed to avert catastrophe. As in the Louvre, the Winged Victory of Samothrace, though sadly mutilated, yet retains all the unconscious arrogance of classic beauty, so mankind, despite its sufferings, should exult in the new and untested powers that science has given, and should determine to use them, not for destruction, but for the construction of a new world worthy of the high destiny to which man is called. Lack of confidence, lack of courage can only hasten the day when, indeed:

"The tides of doom return."

NICHOLAS MANSERGH



## NORTH WIND

To-day the winds unroll in hurricanes  
To-day the hours set sail It is the fear  
of missing an appointment and the hours  
quit us with the smiles of faithless boys

Awaited Awaited The night gleams with blades  
champion blades in the eyes of the stars  
The caverns of our submarine forests  
cover over panthers while the skin  
pricked with needles trembles like a pool

Drawn cries of meteors in the red nightmare  
The winds that obsess us sweep our desires  
This sky will fall upon us and the stars  
one in three of them, arrows out of space

Thirsty flowers bend before the squall  
unquiet looks come and go and yawn  
Yellow wind with peg-teeth yellow wind  
that gilds the roofs uplifts the yellow birds  
on the bias through evening's daffodils

The pillow burns the nacreous house of dreams  
the sands efface our blood, the birds melt down  
the birds hurl down pest chanting in their wings  
and milky bodies swelled in fear explode

BRIAN COFFEY

## WINDS OF THE WORLD

Enough o' nights when the winds of the world  
are warmed in wild disorder and  
the black elf clouds are  
pantomime cats,  
hurled,  
falling dismembered in puffs of smoke—  
the nauseating odour of fungi balls.

O give us nights when the  
winds of the world are tame  
and the wild ways of the world restrained  
and the winds' hair about evening's wine lights  
in orderly tresses,  
sailing,  
clematis curled.

EILEEN BRENNAN

## FAIR DAY

WHEN the alarm clock went off at three o'clock in Nora's room, Martin opened his eyes on the pitch dark of the January morning. He was more dead than alive—certainly much more asleep than awake. It wasn't always so on a fair morning; he could rise as well as another, but this time the schedule had gone awry. He had had only a few hours' sleep, for Julietta, Eithne's beloved heifer, had kept him out of his bed with the fuss over her premature calf. Now the calf was lost and the child would have to be told in his next letter. She took things so terribly to heart, like her dead mother. Martin listened, not daring to close his eyes again, to the drowsy eaves-dribble of the rain and to the noise of tinkling table-ware from the kitchen downstairs. Nora came then and hammered discreetly on his door—a little dance of finger-nails—and he called softly: "Coming!" "Are you out but?" she wanted to know, in a guarded voice, for Nuala's room was just across the passage. Martin slung his feet over the edge of the bed so that they thudded on the floor, "yes, I'm out." He heard her chortle as she stole away.

The candle, lighted, showed up a tumble of grey army blankets and old-fashioned patchwork quilt. The white-washed ceiling was showing cracks, and in a corner the damp was turning down the wall-paper again. It would best Nora in the end, that corner. He dressed fumblingly, his eyes half-shut.

He found Nora in the kitchen, half-awake, a coat over her nightdress tightened with a leather belt. "Be sure and go back to bed," he told her, "I wish to God I could." She turned out the oil-stove and sat opposite to him, sipping a cup of tea. "I will, I suppose," she answered. The candle-light thrown upward on her face showed it in unfamiliar and unflattering relief. It wasn't just that she looked older than she had any right to look—she was the youngest of them all and couldn't be more than thirty at the very outside—it was that her face had coarsened. Always his favourite sister, she used to be the best-looking of them all and now she was the worst-looking, you couldn't deny it. There was a frown between her wide, dark eyes and the corners were marred by radiating wrinkles; all from screwing herself up against the weather. Nuala, who worked in a solicitor's office in the town, had none of them, though she studied nearly all night after coming home, more

power to her. And in Sheila's new photograph from America there were none of them, though Sheila was thirty-five. He glanced over at it on the recessed window-sill. Sheila smiled at him out of a fur coat, her waved hair rippling into its high collar. To be sure these American photographers were rogues, and to be sure, Sheila always had been a devil for posing, but there were things you couldn't fake, like the contented lips, the rested eyes.

Nora was smiling when he caught her eye at last. She knew a fellow's very thoughts, that one. "All the same," he heard himself say, "you ought to marry John Fogarty, Nora. You ought to marry John." Nora cupped her two hands, begging-wise, and he threw a cigarette into them, striking a match for her along his thigh. "I'll marry no lout of a gombeen-man," Nora said, "the land for me, Murt." The shadows of her lashes, as she tossed her head, emitting smoke, made tiny lines on the smooth walls of her eye-sockets, and as her temper flooded her face, like a light, he saw in a flash the beauty that cannot be destroyed. "I won't leave the land," Nora said, "you'll be late if you don't stir."

Martin felt his heart leap and turn over within him, the way it always did at gladsome things, like yesterday's sunset all red on hills white with snow. They were all that was left in him of his one-time youngness, these little leaps of heart; they came with growing intensity, yet at ever-lengthening periods. It must be, he thought, that fewer things, as you grow old, make you glad, but when they do, they make you gladder. Inarticulate even in his mind, he felt tangled up inside him as he stepped out into the slushy yard. Only the gladness remained to warm him. Nora wasn't going to leave him to struggle with letters, to pale before Final notices, to wrestle with accounts. They had all gone, Eoin the priest and Nuala the accountant and Eamonn the commercial and Sheila the exile . . . and Bardie, their Republican dead . . . But Nora, the brains of the farm, wasn't going. The land for her.

He had a bunch of yearlings for the fair. He could just discern their outlines converging on the gap with Shuiler the collie and Eithne's young Alsatian Finner at their heels. Already there was a stretch in both ends of the day. The air was drizzle-clogged, you could hardly breathe; before him sky and earth were blended in one uncertain colour which had in it both grey and brown. He studied it, between his watching of the cattle, and remembered with that old, that undying, pang, that it was Maire, his dead wife, who had taught him to use his



eyes. Eithne, clothed with her mother's flesh, was sharper, sturdier, readier with words.

It was seven miles to the town and if the fair was any good at all he could be home in Eamonn's car in the afternoon. Once to walk these broken miles was quite enough. He heard chaps saying they couldn't stand the pavements, but he didn't agree. The concrete, when you couldn't see, didn't turn you into holes and turn your boots edgewise on ridges, jerking you out of your thoughts till your head was a whirlpool where everything floated in dizzy circles and nothing could settle down.

His hand struck the corner of a letter in his pocket and he went over it in his mind as he walked. It was the last one from Eithne. She wanted money again. He could see clearly, on the background of his mind, the sprawling hand below the Dominican crest. "Dear darling Murt mo Chroide, you have to send another fee. This time it's music and let me tell you you are throwing it away. These chromatics give me the head-staggers, imagine a man letting on he can tell one from the other. Of course there's the fee. They are putting me in for a Scholarship, but what a hope. The Maw of the University will never get *me*. Did Julietta calf and is Finner well? . . . ."

Oh, these fees were a worry, a worry. But just now the worry sank in his realisation that, in effect, Eithne had said in that letter just what Nora had said a while ago: "The land for me." *She* would be no deserter. She was an out-door fairy from her head to her feet. There came into Martin's mind, as he walked along, the words of a half-jarred sailor whom he had met once, never seen again and never forgotten. "It leaves you no good for anything else. You're a stumbler away from it, with nothing in your head but nights and days. And it breaks you. By God, it breaks you. But it gives you something nothing else can give, I'll swear to that. Don't ask me what it is. I don't know." He had talked, that man so poetic in his cups, of the sea. But he had put words on all that Martin, himself so inarticulate, felt about the land.

An hour before noon he ran into a Dane at the fair who took the last of his bunch. It was fifteen years since they had met, yet the fair-haired genial stranger jumped on him. The Dane said that he knew nothing of cattle. "Notting. But I have luck. You have bringed what? I have luck always. I buy. I thrive." There was a set-to, all the same, over the yearlings, and after a good deal of shenanigan, Martin wondered if it was all luck, after all.

He went to the small hotel for his dinner, which he always

patronised. John Fogarty was waiting for a table there, in the little diningroom, which was crowded to the door. They got a table presently, between two doors and were thankful for it, draught and all. To Martin it was good only to sit down. "How's Nora?" John Fogarty wanted to know, right in front of the waitress. "Shining," Martin answered, and as, later, he plodded through his mouthfuls he was aware of something, like a shadow—a chill such as you feel on a changeable day when the sun goes in—on his heart. "How is your mother, John?" he asked. "Fine," the other said, "grand now. But that 'flu is a dose, I'm telling you."

"She'll marry no lout of a gombeen-man," John Fogarty said suddenly, after a silence. Martin started, almost guiltily, and met the other's eyes, only to find them full of reminiscent laughter. And they looked beyond him, Martin, over his shoulder and beyond . . . and were full of an almost embarrassing tenderness. "So she said that, to your face?" Martin heard himself mumble. John Fogarty's eyes came back and saw. "Oh, out loud," he said proudly, "Nora is like that." The laughter died away and left John Fogarty sitting there, with something shy and even furtive in his face. He rose precipitately. "Be up to the shop, Martin?" "Shortly," Martin said, nodding. "Don't disappoint my mother," John said, and went out, picking a zig-zag way between the extra chairs.

Martin sat on, his mind working sadly, slowly, inexorably. It wasn't just that a little phrase which he had thought Nora had shared with him only had been shared also with her lover; it wasn't just that, whatever way it was between them, Nora was sufficiently intimate to say all that to John's face without offending; it was that, whatever it was that was between them, it wasn't over. A fool could see that.

Standing without in the street, his unwordable thoughts churning within him, Martin raised his head at the noise of blows and squeals, at the thudding of cudgels on bare hogbacks. A fool of a drover that was, and no mistake. Hang it, they had their feelings, the creatures, witness the cries, and apart from all else, he was ruining the bacon. He longed for the moral courage to interfere, but stuck to his pavement. Eithne now, she wouldn't stick to the pavement. How often had she made him wish himself under the road, shouting at people, and all of them his neighbours. Oh, she was a rose of a child, a great youngster. If only she was here now!

Then Martin saw the Dane come bearing down on the drover and blows and squealing ceased. Splenetic ephithets, made

wondrously effective by a broken accent, filled the outraged air. Martin turned in at Fogarty's doorway, smiling gently. Yet as he thumped-thumped up Fogarty's stair, somewhere far down inside him he knew himself hurt obscurely because in all that street the foreigner was the only one who had interfered.

Mrs. Fogarty took both his hands. "I'm not fit to come in," Martin said, looking down at himself. His suit was ruined with the drizzle, and there was many-coloured mud on his boots from the fair-fouled streets. It wasn't until you saw yourself beside other people . . . Mrs. Fogarty said "Wisha, Martin," reproachfully, and led him to a soft chair beside a roaring fire. "As large as life, God bless you, Martin," she said, standing before him, a world of welcomes in her candid face, "and smiling into yourself, like good people do. Lord leave you the health, son." Well, as to the smile, it had just come to Martin that, very likely, it was how the Dane had bought the pigs.

"Listen to that, Martin," Mrs. Fogarty said, presently, standing with bent head. The wind was rising, you couldn't deny it, however you might like to. "Gales everywhere," he told her, "God grant it's not our turn." He thought suddenly of the slates on the barn, and of how he had meant to secure them, but they weren't right yet, he had not got round to them; and of how dear they would be to replace if anything happened them . . . and of Eithne's dead calf, and of Eithne's fees, and of the rates, and of Nora and John . . . One of the things Martin had against sitting still was the way your worries came at you when they got you down for a spell.

Eamonn called for him at last. No question as to whether *he* was fit to come in. From the top of his head he was finely clad and smooth and pleasant. You would never think to look at him there, that the road was a hard-enough life in its way and that many a time he was pushed enough to make ends meet. "I'm late," Eamonn said, "punctures. None for four months and then two in an hour. Think of it, will you, because I can't? And if we have the proverbial third, we can get out and shove her, son."

Well, coming home in Eamonn's car was certainly a lot better than hoofing it. "Light us a fag," Eamonn said, "what sort was the Fair?" "Middling," Martin said, "so-so." Eamonn took the lighted cigarette and turned on him. "My God, so-so. You fellows are never satisfied. You sold your stuff, didn't you? Look behind and take a gawk at mine." Martin glanced briefly over his shoulder. He didn't feel their cases were the same but he couldn't explain why. Words



always stumped him and he was getting worse. "Hand to mouth," he muttered obscurely, "... dog's life." He felt absurdly angry at he knew not what. The car skidded suddenly and Eamonn closed his lips on something he had been about to answer. "How's that?" he asked presently, "well held, eh? Such a road. Like crude oil after the drizzle. Hand to mouth is the story of our whole generation, son."

They relapsed into silence. Martin tried hard not to look at the speedometer, though when he saw, in the corner of his eye, the familiar hedge turned into one brown-purple streak it was just as bad. The rows of larches which Maire had loved which she had said were old-fashioned because they wore spotted muslin, came and passed like trusted friends gone crazy in a dream. Away beyond them, he noticed with one of his heart-leapings, the limes along the little river's edge had taken on a tone of red and looking eagerly he saw how, farther off, the same warm colour had swept through all the bare trees on the hill slopes. It was the first, the faint, the far-away promise of spring. Only the initiate knew of it—this blush at the quickening.

As they turned in at the first gate Eamonn burst out: "This entrance of yours—you ought to do something with it. It's a disgrace. It has no proper edge. It would give you the willies. It isn't civilised." No doubt but what Eamonn could use words. Martin sighed. "Surely," he said, "I will." He wanted to add how hard it was to get time for everything, but thought it would sound like growling, so he let it go. But still that lava seethed in him out of sight, in his deep places . . . and in a moment he was startled to hear rumblings coming out of himself . . . "just that it gets me sometimes, I can't help it, when I'm all cow-dung and Nora is all flour and one of you comes picking your steps across the yard, like you weren't reared on it, the same as us. Oh, I'm not growling at you. It won't help us if you spoil your clothes. I don't know what I'm growling at . . . I get mad . . . like this evening in Fogarty's there—you the gentleman, and me not fit to come in . . ."

The car splattered across the yard and pulled up. Eamonn jumped out, leaned in again through the opened door, put his elbow on the steering-wheel and on it laid a truculent chin. "Now you listen to me. Cowdung or no cowdung you're the most authentic gentleman I've ever come across . . . Hop out, you great galoot."

Nora passed with two buckets under the laurels on the way

to the well, and in the rising wind they fingered her cloudy dark, short hair as she went by. The field above the well had had its first turning and the clay clung to her soles. The rain was over, and she left the pails on a mossy stone and wiped her shoes edgewise against a sod. The clay was all about her, lumpy, broken, dark. In a world all shiny-wet, it only did not shine. Oh, how good it was—the clay. If only John Fogarty knew the cunning of the land.

She lifted a sod from which a small pink worm thrust outward, upward, a frantic pointed head. She watched him wave this way and that, seeking for support in the unstable air. Nora put the sod down gently and watched him make away with incredible speed through the more solid clay. "You don't see anything wrong with it, do you?" she said softly. "No more do I." She felt the hot tears rise unbidden behind her eyes, so snapped her spine straight, straight, and looked across the fields to keep them back. But across the fields there were shadowy children dancing—like John Fogarty, like her—girls with long legs like Eithne and plaits that flapped in the wind. She wouldn't rear them in the town, not she. They'd be out here as much as there. They'd—. Her throat closed. Her eyes had to be emptied. She took the buckets and dipped them and, as she leant over the dark, built-over water, heard across country the rumble of Eamonn's car.

Nuala had her heels on the kitchen range as they came in. "A vision of beauty," Eamonn said, spilling her out of the chair and taking it. "What sort was the fair?" Nuala asked Martin. She ignored Eamonn, stretched herself audibly, luxuriously, and when he thought it was all over kicked him smartly. All through tea they kept up their quarrelsome din, then surprisingly paired off and went back into town, in Eamonn's car, to the pictures.

"Why didn't you go?" Martin asked Nora. "Because I'm going to bed," she answered quickly, "right at once. I meant to get back this morning after you left, but you know the way it is—too many little jobs all waiting to be got out of the way." "So you're up since four," Martin said gloomily. "So are you," she came back pat. She had been up since three.

It wouldn't do. All the inarticulate, slowly-gathering anger came to a head. "You didn't ask me," he said, "did I meet John Fogarty?" "Well," she countered mockingly, "and did you meet John Fogarty?" "I met him," Martin answered rumblingly. He never yet had wanted his voice badly but it

let him down. Nora knew that voice as well as he did. Nora knew what a fellow was thinking about. Her chin flew up, and the way her head was, and the way things were, he couldn't help wondering if John Fogarty hadn't frequently found her eyelashes a trial. "So he thinks I don't mean it, does he? Well, I do."

There was a little laden silence. In that silence all Martin's formless anger fizzled out. He saw now that because of his need of her he had asked Nora to do something which no human had a right to ask another to do. He saw that because she was so very great Nora would do it. But it wasn't quite so bad as that. He hadn't known. "You've been fooling me," he said presently, sadly, "I thought you didn't care about him, Nora, and you do." "What of it?" Nora said fiercely, "I won't leave you, Murt. What would you do? . . . You big softie . . . Eamonn swiping odd quarters of bacon that we'll never get paid for, and Nuala rent free up there. I don't grudge them. They're our own. But a man like you knows nothing about business. You need someone about." She took some cigarettes from the mantel and passed him one.

"They never saw us stuck," Martin said, slowly, "either of them. Only for Eamonn we'd never get anywhere—we couldn't afford to. And Nuala handed me just now a cheque for half the rates. But you," he said, and looked at her . . . Yes, what would he do? . . . "You won't be going so far," he said. "You won't be going to America. You'll be in and out." Their eyes met and they stayed looking at one another and then she dropped the famous lashes and turned her back. "Nora," Martin said, "it was all right for me. I've had my life with Maire. But you—you had no right to hide that from me."

Shuiler, the old collie, came and thrust her nose into Nora's hand. When Nora went upstairs Shuiler laid her chin on Martin's thigh. "Yes," Martin said to Shuiler, "she'll be in and out, old-timer."

Julietta bellowed and he remembered sharply what Eithne had to be told. He leant against the dresser and thought of Eithne, aged fifteen. Oh, it was a sweet age, a grand age of enthusiasms and loyalties and discoveries. She was all legs, the child. And standing there, in the dim old kitchen, it came home to Martin, the way things came in on his mind when he was quiet, that Eithne, too, would have to go . . . It wasn't that he thought her too good for the land. No one was too good for it. It was that, the way things were, the life the land gave wasn't one you would wish to anyone you loved. Something



would have to be done. "They all go," he thought, "and leave too few of us to swing the whittle-tree." The fewer there were, the dirtier the work; the dirtier the work, the fewer there were.

Finner, the young Alsatian, laid an incredibly beautiful head on Martin's muddied boot. "Something," Martin said to him, "will surely be done. But not in your day, Finner. Not in mine." Hired help would do, of course, but he wished passionately, he couldn't help it, for some of his own on this place where they had all been reared. He foresaw, in this lonesome hour, all the lonesome years to come; visits from them all, picking their way across the yard; letters from Eithne. If the maw of the University didn't get her, the maw of some metropolis would, and he had best make up his mind to the fact that, from now on, all he would have of her would be the letters, maybe once a week, and maybe twice or thrice a year her clear voice ringing to him across the fields . . .

Well, he couldn't go with her. He was fit for nowhere else. He couldn't leave the old place, anyway, and there was no one else to hold it. If Eoin hadn't gone, if Sheila hadn't gone, if Nuala had been born without ambition, if Eamonn had liked the land, if Nora hadn't liked John Fogarty, if Bardie hadn't died . . . .

Oh, the land, the land! It breaks you, and withers, as with fire. You were a slave to it, tongue-tied and clumsy; you were a stumbler, a back number. But it gave you something, too, he didn't know what it was. He couldn't see why they went away from it; left it for office stools and crowded streets and artificial lights that turn the skin to parchment. No, standing there, dead beat and ready to drop into his bed, he couldn't see it.

"Well," Martin said. The dogs jumped and sat alert, their eyes watching his eyes. "She'll be in and out," Martin said, his hand on Shuiler's head, and when Finner, jealous, thrust forward, Martin stroked the great forehead. "And *she*," he said to Finner, "she'll be home for Easter—nine weeks, three days, boy." He put them out, leaving the door on the latch for the others, and went up to his room.

He stripped fumblingly, with shut eyes, and before his head hit the pillow was back in Eamonn's car with Maire seated beside him pointing out the speeding trees—larches in spotted muslin, limes flushed with the quickening.

# LETTER OF THE MONTH

## PARIS : THE EXHIBITION

It is appropriate that Art should have a prominent place at the Paris Exhibition. Anything else would be unworthy of Paris. The city is so unique as an Art centre. Apart from its museums, all the little academies where one can draw from the life for the whole afternoon for a few francs, and the unfailing lure of the dealers' windows in the Rue de la Boétie, Paris has that peculiar atmosphere that comes from having been the seat of the most significant and revolutionary movements in Art within the last sixty or seventy years. Perhaps it is this knowledge that makes one feel that Art is a vital force in the life of Paris in a sense in which it is nowhere else. It is not merely that one meets so many people in Paris who are actively interested in Art and have that fine taste and quick understanding, which is the result of conscientious appreciation, of the habit of approaching artistic matters in a sympathetic and unprejudiced way. It is also that this fairly widespread standard of personal culture seems to extend to the civic and official life of the country. The Frenchman considers that it is just as proper that his public authorities should foster Art as that it should encourage public health, technical education or public works; and, in fact, the French Government seems to do more for Art than other governments without giving to its action those objectionable features which the official encouragement of artistic development is always so liable to assume.

All this is very well illustrated by the remarkable mural decorations of the French official pavilions at the Exhibition—the Palais de l'Aviation, the Palais des Chemins de Fer, and so on. No visitor to the Exhibition should miss seeing these works, because they are very characteristic both of the French attitude to Art and of the place which Paris occupies to-day in the world of Painting. They are all by painters whose names have been associated with the revolutionary movements of the last 15 or 20 years—Survage, Raoul Dufy, Gleize, Delaunay, and others. I can not, of course, attempt to describe the decorations themselves. They are abstract interpretations of the subjects they depict, great plastic rhythms in pure colour, architecturally conceived and designed in harmony with the architectural design of the pavilions which they decorate. The

significant thing, however, is that these great murals, decorating the walls of the French Government pavilions at the Exhibition, serve to make known to the visitor who sees them, not only the contribution which artists working and living in Paris have made to the part of painting in our time, but also the fact that, after all the heated controversy to which the modern movement in painting gave rise, the work of these men has now come to be regarded, in France at least, in the light of great artistic achievement. All the murals were, of course, specially commissioned by the organisers of the Exhibition and paid for out of public funds. But official interest did not cease with the mere provision of the necessary money. The carrying out of the designs was followed by the officials concerned with the closest interest, and even the responsible Cabinet Ministers found time, in the midst of the political upheavals, which are unfortunately so common in France, to visit the work in progress.

I must not deny that my enthusiasm for these mural decorations is coloured by the fact that I was fortunate enough to see them being carried out and to work on some of them myself. Nothing could have been more delightful or inspiring. The artists responsible for the designs began work, with their teams of assistants, at seven o'clock each morning in a vast garage, which served as the necessary studio. As the day wore on, the June sun streaming down through the glass roof made the place almost unbearably hot ; men stripped to the waist and women clad in beach pyjamas worked against the great background of colour furnished by the canvasses until the scene came to assume the appearance of a crowded and colourful *plage*. A stream of visitors picked their way each day through the paint pots, beer bottles and other paraphernalia littering the floor, critics, architects, politicians, and last, but not least, Henri Matisse himself, whose very name was enough to bring everyone from the work to see him and hear him speak.

Just now Paris is a live city for the artist and the art lover. There is infinite variety, the Chinese exhibition in the Orangerie, Early Austrian art in the Jeux de Paume, El Greco in Musée des Beaux Arts. But to me the Exhibition of modern art in the Petite Palais is the *pièce de resistance*. Here is work of the douanier Rousseau, of Modigliani, Picasso, Juan Gris, Braque, Surville, Delaunay, Gleize. To the painter the vitality is here, and somehow, too, the ordinary spectator must find here some link with political Paris, with the ferment of the people of



Paris in the Bois, on the Champs Elysée. Something is happening in the mind and heart of Europe, a conflict between revolution and reaction. It is here in the painting of these men.

To talk of them as painters one becomes involved in all sorts of endless technical detail. What is there of greatest value to the spectator is the evidence in line, form and colour, of the the whole revolutionary movement that is modern art. These men, in widely different ways, have been fighting free from an idea that art was little more than representational. And now that they are free it is interesting to see what they are doing with their freedom. The exhibition covers modern painting from the first analytical days of cubism on to the inspired emotional and poetic expression of life in abstract form and colour. In the Modern Exhibition one can admire all the artists who have made modern painting. Here is the Picasso with his vigour and inventive genius, Matisse with his voluptuous conception of form, his rich rendering of colour, his youthful directness and freshness. Here, too, one can see in his pictures the fine *sensibilité* of Braque, his rhythm of line the enveloping colour most tenderly conceived. The Modiglianis alone are worth going to see ; they are superb examples of the genius of this great painter, who occupies so unique a place in the history of modern painting.

But it is enough to be in Paris, to drink beer by the river, to watch the faces of the crowds in the iridescent coloured lights of the fountains. Paris is the world—the glass of fashion and the mould of form for the world's cities. To be in Paris is to be alive, not merely as an artist, but as a human being. When there one can accept it so completely, be at one with it. Some things in the Exhibition jarred with my Paris. The grandiose neo-classicism of the German pavilion was somehow out of tune with the Parisian symphony. Vying with it from across the way the big Russian pavilion was strong and imposing, surmounted by two exalted figures, representing, I suppose, a man and woman of the proletariat. Inside it was little more than a museum of propaganda. France's own pavilions were perfect, particularly the Palais de l'Aviation.

But I must leave this fascinating subject and resist the temptation to go on and on vainly seeking to describe the indescribable. One must see Paris and the Exhibition for oneself.

FRANCES KELLY

## ART

### STOP THIEF !

THAT there are many things wrong with the world to-day even we, in this remote corner, are sadly aware, for there surely never was a period in human history when man asked more frequently or more desperately what those things were. Without venturing to diagnose or prescribe for social maladies, it is safe to say that the disappearance of Public Opinion is definitely pathological. Thoughtful observers have traced the decay of Public Opinion to the influence of newspapers, whose editors, both in their leading articles and their presentation of the news, have very kindly obviated the necessity for thought among the reading public, but equally potent for evil is the terrifying growth of Statute Law. Laws and Bye-laws now hedge us in on every side, and have relieved us of the necessity for any sense of duty to our neighbours. The natural result is a general feeling that an act is right if no penalty attaches to it, and the word "just" has been conveniently displaced by the word "legal." No matter how vile a thing is done it arouses no savage indignation, it is no longer anybody's business and we approach that idyllic state when a collie-dog will harry us to the meals chosen for us by a dietician, passed by a government inspector, and rammed down our throats by a policeman—the diners paying the inevitable tribute to the courtesy of the Guards.

Side by side with this surrender to the State of the natural Rights of Man has arisen the worship of the Expert and the delegation to him of the right to think. We have Experts on every conceivable subject, from finger-prints to colour-prints, whose dicta are sacred. It is even possible that persons who are kind enough to read these notes may be misled by the fancy that the writer is an Expert on Art, a charge which the writer takes this occasion to disclaim.

It is true that there were always experts, but it is only of recent years that the expert has become an idol. Formerly, for instance, if a man wished to build a house, it is true that he employed an architect, but he retained sufficient human dignity to evince some faint interest in the house he was to inhabit. If his architect had said to him: "You must have a sun-trap house," he would very probably ask what a sun-trap house was; and then he would change his architect.

Now, however, such is the anaesthetic power of phrases that the mere mention of the word "sun-trap" deprives a man of his power of reason and implants in his vacant mind a dim idea that the architect has discovered some magical way of bottling sunshine. And even when his house is built and its ugliness shocks the remnant of intelligence left to him, he smothers his revulsion with an ejaculation to the sacred name of Progress.

The manner in which a landscape is affected and a people's environment is moulded by builders and architects is a matter of real concern; but, like many matters of concern, it is nobody's business. As there is no law against vitiating public taste no one protests against the Martian buildings which

are multiplying around us and outrage the landscape at every turn of our suburban roads. Already the first shock has passed and a bewildered acceptance is noticeable.

In some obscure way this kind of building is associated with electricity, in itself a guarantee of Progress, possibly because the first examples of the new architecture were seen in electric power-stations. Dynamos don't care and the night watchman is asleep in his box. To house this mysterious force, which our grandfathers knew not, a definite break with architectural tradition (symbolising the electrical revolution) seemed to be justifiable. It was a conscious break, a deliberate interference with aesthetic evolution, the result of an intellectual process and emphatically not demanded by any development in public taste. From the power station the disease spread to new factories, possibly because their owners do not have to live in them and they are inhabited solely by "hands." Having thus accustomed the sheep to the new architecture it was comparatively easy to persuade the more thick-skinned and weak-minded ones that they were behind the times, a charge which no sheep can bear, and that they would be happier in a modern house, that is, one departing in its external appearance so far from the traditional idea of a home, that a man living in it must feel that he has no ancestors.

It must be noted that tradition is discarded not because it is bad, or outworn, as it may be, but merely because it is tradition, on the general assumption that our ancestors had neither intelligence nor a sense of beauty, and architects apparently sit up at night thinking out new ways of being different, borrowing from Lapland or Mexico, but sedulous to avoid anything which might be suspected of native roots.

An early and influential example of this heresy occurred, strangely enough, in a Catholic Church. One would imagine that tradition had some value in the Catholic Ritual. There was a pretty general impression that the Catholic Church was more than a week old. But at Turner's Cross, in the diocese of Cork, a Futurist Church has been erected, indistinguishable in character from a cinema theatre, which if recognisable at all as a place of worship would be instinctively identified as the "Temple" of some snappy sect. The Church, in fact, has been "hotted up" in the City of Cork.

An architect writing in the pages of *IRELAND TO-DAY* asked how long would we in a country blessed with very little sun have to wait for the flat roof. I do not propose to cross technical pens with an architect, but I think I can answer this one with the words: "For ever, please God." It is possible that some problems in construction have been solved which have made the flat roof—a salient feature of the "modern" house—as cheap and as serviceable as any other, but we are justified in suspecting that if building costs could be reduced a fraction by the flat roof, our public spirited contractors would be using them in the vast housing schemes now in progress. We may suspect also a fallacy in the suggestion that a flat roof is suitable for our climate since no one has ever seen the owner of a flat roof taking advantage of it. And,



indeed, no one but a fool in this country of verdant lawns and blooming gardens would choose to sit in the sun on a concrete roof. There is some reason to believe also that our ancestors who developed the gabled roof were not all asses. But if one were to grant that the flat roof were cheaper, more durable, more suitable for the climate and modern conditions and as beautiful, in the abstract, as the gabled roof, there would still be a paramount reason for retaining the ancient contour. And that reason would be the powerful instinct for uniting our present lives with the habits and customs of our progenitors, the instinct which makes us hold fast to our roots in the past. It is not too much to say that the flat roof *cannot* be beautiful in Ireland, except, perhaps, to visitors from the slopes of Popocatepetl, whose hearts, no doubt, will leap up when they behold the fake adobe walls which frequently support these structures.

"I never lived in a thatched cottage," said an artist recently, "but when I think of the word 'home,' the image of a thatched cottage comes into my mind." Similarly no Irishman can look unmoved at Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel or St. Kevin's in Glendalough. The lines and proportions of these buildings, with their high-pitched stone roofs, waken in us an immediate response, the source of which is an aesthetic heritage from the builders. Irishmen raised these monuments a thousand years ago, and they still unmistakably express the artistic spirit of the race. Through the centuries we have been losing sight of the artistic principles which animated these old builders, and they have been almost extinguished by the schools of Gandon and Wren. Now our architects seem to aim at eradicating the last traces of the antique spirit, and although no Irish architect is to be blamed for the design of the Church at Turner's Cross, it may yet be necessary to submit to another Act of Parliament providing against the erection of a Pagoda or an Igloo on the Rock of Cashel.

JOHN DOWLING

# MUSIC

## FREE STATE BROADCASTING—II

In my last article I dealt somewhat generally with the control exercised over broadcasting by the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, and, more particularly, with the effect of such control upon the only established orchestra we have here, the permanent Irish Radio Orchestra—a sufficiently sorry state of affairs. Such outside control is, I think, somewhat worse in its effects upon programmes.

As I said before, the Department of Posts and Telegraphs have hired out the subscribers' property for one hour, the best hour, each night, to the promoters of the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes and for this they receive somewhere about thirty thousand pounds each year, which sum they quietly annex for their own purposes—to use a diplomatic word which covers a multitude of sins. Apart altogether from the ethical and financial aspects of such proceeding, this hiring out of the Athlone station for an hour from half-past nine o'clock each evening, seriously interferes with programme production. As the most important broadcasting session commences about eight o'clock in the evening, this hiring means that major features in the night programme must not exceed one and a half hours in duration, or else such features must commence earlier in the evening. Thus, symphony concerts, that are the highest flight of our broadcasting expenditure, being given on but half-a-dozen occasions in the year, to allow of their two hours' duration, must commence at half past seven—an hour that is unsuitably early from all points of view. So, too, because of this hour of commercial broadcasting, relays of dramatic performances from theatres like the Abbey must needs be confined to, at most, a couple of acts of a play. In fact, while this hour of commercial broadcasting has a place in the schedule of the Athlone station, there is no possibility of anything like long unified production-programmes.

But, perhaps, the greatest iniquity of this commercial hour is that it makes impossible the pursuit by the Broadcasting executive of any ultimate cultural aim in its programmes. It must be admitted that our broadcasting programmes shew little sign of being dictated by anything other than the necessity of filling up certain allotted hours with some sort of entertainment, obtained and produced, obviously, as cheaply as possible ; but, I am not sure that it is quite just to lay upon the Broadcasting executive the whole blame for the lack of "direction-sense" that is painfully apparent. For what aesthetic or cultural purpose is served by producing, say, Yeats' "Countess Kathleen," if immediately on its termination—

"The years like great black oxen tread the world  
And I am broken by their passing feet"

we are to be told that our future depends upon the immediate investment of ten shillings, which advice is accompanied by a gramophone record of a milk-fed crooner wallowing in "My Sweetie went away?" I am not criticising the

programme sent out by the directors of the Hospitals Sweepstakes, who make no pretensions to cultural aims and who use the hour solely for their own commercial purposes, giving programmes whose content is dictated by entertainment values only—using the word entertainment in its most frivolous sense—but just saying that this commercial hour would cut across and nullify any cultural scheme planned by the Broadcasting executive. Thus the re-investment in the service of the profit extracted commercially from national broadcasting would only half purge the offence of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs against both ethics and culture ; the only solution of the difficulty would be the provision of a separate station with a different wave-length for such commercial broadcasts.

In a previous article I referred, *en passant*, to the routine system devised for the remuneration of artists. The system would work splendidly if all men and all groups of men were equal, in artistic performance ; but, unfortunately, each and every artist is an individual and no routine system of payment is possible, if such small things as equity and justice are to be taken into consideration. I know that these things are now but “part of an ancient ceremony,” though some of us have still a weak hankering after them—even if they be mere abstract concepts we still think of them as desirable, long-sought. Under the present routine system of payment a bad banjoist will receive the same pay for his services as the most highly cultured artist. Payment is calculated on the duration of performance—ten pounds per hour ; this is all, and is perhaps a little more than the service can afford to spend in its present artificial financial difficulties. (This is the maximum expenditure permitted the service ; for Children’s Hour programmes payment may be reduced to five pounds per hour.) So that if an artist prepares, say, a string quartette for a half-hour performance, putting in a minimum of eight hours’ rehearsal, he and his fellows will be rewarded by Posts and Telegraphs with a cheque for five pounds or thereabouts, a maximum of twenty-five shillings each, from which must be deducted the purchase price of the music played. And it does not matter that these men may be the most expert in Ireland—they may be an Irish Lener quartette—they still receive their twenty-five shillings, Israfel, were he leader, Israfel himself would not receive more. Out of a great and staggering ignorance Posts and Telegraphs have so decided. (Readers mathematically inclined can work out for themselves what the members of a large choir would receive for such half-hour performance ; any fractions of pence less than a farthing had better be ignored.) Thus, the position is that our broadcasting service depends for its programmes, as far as personal performance is concerned, upon amateurs, mainly, who play their “party-pieces” to the admiration of their friends, whatever about others, or upon such groups as are willing for the sake of art, or advertisement, to pocket their pittance with as good a grace as they can muster and go their way. So we have the programmes we have, God help us ! I know this sounds like a special plea for the professional—musician, entertainer or otherwise—but at the moment I am



not thinking on those lines ; I am just penning a re-hash of an old forgotten statement that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." Naturally the Department of Posts and Telegraphs is proud to function in such a highly Christian state as ours, issues Congress commemoration stamps, etc. ; but, equally naturally, it does not allow any fustian like Christian ethics interfere with its bargain hunting. It sees to it that Athlone for certain hours each day puts forth a series of noises—whether intelligible or otherwise is of little concern, and such noises may be listened to on payment of a half-guinea ; for such sum subscribers are entitled to receive "nothing wrapped up in a parcel," mainly.

Of course we have not reached zero in programme quality yet. A friend of mine has suggested that Posts and Telegraphs will ultimately banish both artists and gramophone-records from its broadcasting programmes, and, employing two announcers of guaranteed physical stamina, will equip these unfortunates with "hurdy-gurdies," the kind that may be hired for half-a-crown per day. (I see no reason myself, why these athletes, if properly fortified with the necessary stimulants, could not each give an exhilarating four-hour exhibition grind daily ; and, there would be no necessity to change the tunes until the announcers' sanity, if any, was imperilled.) And really this suggestion of banishment is not so far-fetched as it might appear at first sight. A new clause has been inserted recently in all contracts issued by Broadcasting, stating, more or less, that the Director has the right to make records of all broadcasting performances, and use such records at his discretion without further payment. Speaking out of a refreshing ignorance of the law, I should say that the clause, as it stands, is quite illegal, but certainly this attempt at legalizing petty pilfering lends point to my friend's suggestion anent future Broadcasting policy.

I would like again to stress the point that the Broadcasting executive cannot be held responsible for the present state of their programmes ; at ten pounds per hour a sufficiency of dog-fights could not be obtained. I can vouch for the fact, and from personal experience too, that in every way the Executive do what they can to make work an unworkable system ; but, any attempt to vary, even slightly, the application of the routine basis of such system causes so much internal friction, shall we say, in the system, that it becomes judicious, for very safety's sake, to let things stagger along aimlessly. The Executive are provided with so much money, told to toddle along like good little boys and keep up the succession of noises, if of interest, so much the better, provided the expenditure is kept within the limit of the allotted funds. If any art instinct drives an individual into small extra expenditure—woe betide the unfortunate ; he will sit, for months, up to his molars in papers, trying to explain an inexplicable urge to some one who could not understand it even if it were explicable. Of course it is possible to exceed the stipulated amount of ten pounds per hour but only if the Broadcasting executive have received special permission for such excess spending.

If the Broadcasting executive are fit and proper persons for their positions,

*(continued on page 72)*

# THEATRE

## THEATRE-CRAFT—I. (1-8) : PRELIMINARIES

1. Up to now, I have failed to find any study of the Theatre viewed as a whole, as a corporate function of many persons ; there are many excellent studies of various parts of it ; but none of a general yet practical nature, since Aristotle deduced his Poetics from current practice, that are either easily available or are based on correlation of the arts with both genuine insight and commonsense regard for working conditions ; in general, any studies I have read have suffered from being too historical or too literary in approach—the real, human instincts behind such a communal art as the Theatre have been too often refined away to suit semi-symbolic philosophisings in armchairs or preening of plumage in poets' pubs. It seems to me essential for this study that the enquirer's method be almost passive, a direct reporting of his immediate impressions of stage-effect, since effects in the theatre are almost always momentary, continuous only through repetition ; for analysis this method is essential, based on accepting humanity's tastes in theatre-fare, neutrally, without *snobbisme*, as a direct outcome of its own nature. In this way and through the study of analogies in the arts in general, results should be obtained of value to actor, producer, scene-designer, etc., alike. In attempting to arrive at such a touchstone the following notes are offered with much diffidence, increasing steadily as they were written. If "to know is to realise how much you do not know" is true, and it is, then I know quite a lot. However, I hope they will be of interest and may prove helpful to some other Eratosthenes trying to measure the earth's diameter with a yardstick—I often feel that criticism and theory are just as absurd-looking as this, both in scope and in difficulty. As there is material for many articles here, I do not propose to "rush" either the reader or myself, so that variations of view, as my ideas develop, will surely appear. For this and for any falling-away from the attitude outlined above, I ask the reader's indulgence. It would help us both, too, if he were to *read* with an open mind, associating each idea as it is presented with those already offered, so that he extracts the full implications from all. This will involve some effort, perhaps, and to tell the truth only Time can tell if it is worth it ! The reader will also forgive if I seem to ramble all over the place—my excuse is that the Theatre is very old and very widespread, and all the arts have contributed to it. The modern theatre aims at blending all these in a co-ordinated whole and these notes are a very rough attempt at seeing how this may best be done, arguing from first principles and keeping to personal lines of attack as far as possible—that my ideas are coloured, even borrowed, from other writings is, of course, inevitable, and, in fact, only the general agreement in results has made me feel justified in printing them at all. My aim in this has been to free my ideas of the usual pre-judgments, "isms" of psychology, sociology, classic *v.* romantic, form *v.* emotion, art "pure" and "applied," *fauvisme*, *heibrauung* and whatnot ; Art, it seems to me, is always a single experience, artistry a blending of experience, and analysis

without all-round grasp will always kill that vivid singleness—one enjoys a flower held in the hand as a whole thing, not by tearing petal from petal for individual scrutiny, but if other flowers have been already torn to pieces for such examination, one can then visualise such extra detail as latent in this flower now enjoyed, thereby extending one's experience of this flower—here, I have always felt, science joins hands with art: science is codified fact, fact begets experience, codified experience is art—therefore, more science, more facts, more experience, more art. My attitude, therefore, is realist and this accounts for such pedantic platitudes, trite truisms and 'orrible obviousness as may appear; having taken nothing "out of books," the reader must take nothing for granted. N.B.—Bracketed numbers refer to paragraphs of similar content.

2. Firstly, let us attempt a world-view of the Theatre, its aims and practices. Whether elaborated into the Hopi snake-dance or the highly artificial yet naive shadow-plays of Java and Bali, the Punch and Judy show or Abbey realism, the aim is always the same—satisfaction of the instinct for make-believe, the playacting impulse, in short. This is the very essence of Theatre, often cloaked by "isms" and "wasms," but their only justification when successful. This aim first brought it into being when the first playactor first "let on" to be something or somebody else for the pleasure of onlookers or of himself, thereby fulfilling the make-believe instinct of childhood or of primitive, unsophisticated man—a form of Faith or irrational "will-to-believe." The ritual origin, usually suggested, seems to me a later, conscious use of this basic instinct for symbolic representation of tenets of Faith—that this first brought about a fixed scheme of actions and/or words, drama in the literary sense, is probably correct, however.

3. In either case this "will-to-believe" is irrational, as is all art—for there is no reason at all, from the point of view of just keeping alive, why we should alter objects into representations of inner visions or of other forms or objects, with paint, carving, or any other technique—no reason at all but that we like doing it, because it satisfies a real creative instinct, a "will-to-create." It is to be noted that the "will-to-create" is not purely based on desire to *represent* objects—it nearly always involves a distortion of nature, through simplification and/or exaggeration, to enhance the self-assertiveness of the would-be creator, to underline his ability to make his own world, his "apartness" and independence of surrounding realities. That this implies an inner, spiritual, existence in the creator (no matter how distorted when expressed) is, I think, obvious.

4. Thus, to return to "representation," while mimicry is nearly related to the theatre, mimicry alone has never been taken to be *acting*. The distinction seems to be twofold: (1) The mimic is obviously aware of his audience, the actor is not; (2) Mimicry is imitation of something either recent or known and is at once recognisable by direct comparison, acting is creation of something previously unknown yet at once accepted as credible, because true to



nature—human nature, that is. Accordingly, while mimicry is pure representation, acting, to be a creation of something not the actor, must either exaggerate his qualities or else simplify them, while still remaining credible. That different peoples find different degrees of distortion credible does not invalidate the basic truth of this—the game is the same but the rules are different (6).

5. But the whole process is irrational, we must remember, is really non-realist in so far as it is a belief in what is really not there (later we shall see that this belief passes from "let's pretend" to a genuine "I do believe") and paradoxically, it is this that gives "realism" in art its value, because the resulting ease of belief pleases in itself, and representation being so exact, we can judge best of the extent of the "creation," so that the creative instinct is momentarily satisfied in verifying details. But actually this satisfaction is naive, akin to the "believe-it-or-not" pleasure in models or marionnettes. Creation untrammelled by naturalism is more imaginative, more active an expression of man's own being, his "apartness" and separation from nature, more directly an outpouring from his inner nature through his imagination, and is, therefore, of a more advanced kind. But because it is more individual and subjective, this art is harder to communicate although based on more universal elements in nature, is not so universal in appeal except to minds already trained in universals which, in practice, is achieved by cosmopolitanism, a toleration of all human activity in willingness to learn its real worth. This conflict between realism (immediate detail) and the imaginative (general truth) is ever-present, and in the Theatre, with its basis of the human body, which is incapable of complete distortion, or even of over-distortion, through clashing empathies (11), is always going on in cycles, recurring ever quicker as taste is more speedily influenced by the work of others through travel, printing, newspapers, photography, etc. The reaction, beginning in the '70's with Kronegk's Meininger productions, from the previous 150 years of artificial, over-emphatic "star-acting" and decor resulted in a period of realism, degenerated now into mere naturalism without imagination, from which is now arising a growing movement in favour of poetic, non-realist, even symbolic drama.

6. Looking at the Theatre from another angle, we see always in it two elements, a "spectacle" or thing seen or otherwise apprehended, to which spectators apply attributes or pretend a history not actually true. Thus the spectator's role is always subjective, a consciousness of illusion always exists and must be maintained, otherwise he is not getting the desired satisfaction of being deluded. The whole history of theatre-craft depends on this subjective "will-to-believe" of the spectator, either in pandering to it in "box-office" regard for "giving the public what it wants" or in consciously keeping a jump ahead of the spectator so that his taste is continually improving, even though he would be quite content with a present "proved success." From awareness of this fact spring the conventions, the traditions of the theatre—these are the rules of the game which both player and spectator must observe, otherwise

the latter, whom it is the function of the player to lead along, feels baffled, cheated, and finds some other garden to play in. Illusion, the deliberate *conscious* overlooking by the spectator of unrealities in the thing seen in order to watch a game played out in accordance with an accepted logic (not necessarily everyday logic) of conduct and thought, is the basis of Theatre. We see it in the conventional gestures of *Commedia dell' Arte*, the promenade round the stage, to indicate a journey, in Chinese drama and Japanese *Nō*, the delight of a Balinese audience in watching *shadows* act on a screen, every stylised movement, every distinctive shadow-design having a known symbolism. To repeat, such symbols are only particular cases of all theatre illusion-creation, used to supply a certain basic satisfaction—the personal coloration by the spectator of these realities, *external to him*, of movement, speech and background, to generate a satisfying flow of emotionally enriched images in his own mind. This personal value is to him, then, the real value of the thing seen. Benevente relies on this fact for his “antitheatre,” where by implication he creates in the spectator the real drama he aims at, using the ostensible action on stage, complete drama in itself, as a core; actors alone cannot stage Benevente. Thus Maeterlinck writes dramas in which practically nothing happens on stage, everything happens in the spectator's mind. Hamlet's tragedy is his own mind, not the incidents of the play, and because few players can supply that mind or, having it, can disengage themselves from it as they do with an ordinary part, so that the spectator can see it with no gauze of actor-personality coming between, we see few Hamlets. Emotional flow is the mountain of which “action” is only the contour. Again, it is fair approximation to say that where the spectator follows the logic of the action alone, he sees *comedy*, where, in addition, his emotions conflict with the logic we have *satire*, where both agree we have *tragedy*.

7. Thus at bottom the Theatre is for the audience, its work is in co-operation with and from the audience, its success is in the inner reaction of the spectator. This determines the function of the artist onstage. He serves as a core for that reaction, a primary stimulus; he can enhance it by inducing a greater release of emotional reserves than usual through faith in himself intuitively aroused, by departing from the “rules” as unobtrusively as permits his own individuality fair play so as not to hamper this release. In fine, the audience is his raw material, his tools are everything onstage including himself, and his artistry is measured by his exact control of the one by the other. Finally, he can always be his own audience and, in fact, often is, working to satisfy himself first—exact control is then easiest.

8. Again taking a world-view of the Theatre, we can summarise (6) as :

A.—PLAYERS, and B.—AUDIENCE.

These can be sub-divided as follows :—

A 1. Puppets (living or inanimate).

2. Manipulators of these (identified with them when living actors).

3. A place set part for these on which to perform (stage).
  4. A background for A1, to enhance their "apartness" and to provide a jumping-off point for them (Decor—masks, costume and settings).
  5. Sound accompaniment, if any (speech, effects and music).
  6. Designers of speech-scripts—(Authors).
  7.     ,,     ,, movement —(Choreographers).
  8.     ,,     ,, background —(Scene-designers).
  9.     ,,     ,, sound —(Composers).
  10.    ,,     ,, climaxes —(Producers).
  11. Co-ordinator of A1-A11 (Regisseur).
- and B 1. Audience (dead or alive, like the players).
2. A place set apart for these (Auditorium).

In certain cases, especially in modern Western theatre practice, A 3 and B 2 will be roofed in in the one building (or the two buildings linked in design, as in Oberammergau), when we must add another element—C, THEATRE BUILDING (Architect). All these sub-divisions may not be in use at the same time (there is no reason why not, however), but A1, B1 and A3 are essential for real Theatre, where the spectator's "apartness" is vital (6). It is to be noted, however, that A3 can always be created by the player simply by consistently ignoring his audience; we create "drama" for ourselves in daily life when we watch others arguing, involved in an accident, helping one another, all unconscious of our presence: witness the newspaper cliché of "Drama in Court," etc. This ignoring allows the spectator himself to ignore the actual identity of the participants and to "put himself in their place," the essential factor for co-operation (6 and 7). Before treating each section in any detail and to ensure their co-ordinated use, if possible, it is, perhaps, advisable to attempt as deep an analysis of the process of appreciation as can be arrived at; from this something like a general aesthetic may appear, but the emphasis will, of course, be on facts of Theatre—using that term to cover all theatrical activities—from clowns to curtains, from opera to operating, from ballet to Bali.

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS need not detain us long this month. Only two shows were presented: Dorothy Sayers' *Busman's Honeymoon* and Lord Longford's adaptation of Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*; both by the Longford Company at the Gate. Neither is worth detailed review, either in content or treatment, the vampirism of *Carmilla* losing much original horror when transferred from the reader's imagination to the actuality of the stage. Both plays were far too slow in handling and deadish playing killed genuine character-creation in the plays themselves. Dressing was good, as usual, staging fair, but lighting rather murky, the sky lighting being often vile: general result cloying, and whole atmosphere one of struggle to achieve life. Ian Aylmer's Lord Peter Wimsey was stodgy, though the first performance in which he seemed at ease—Wimsey had no whimsy about him, his most likeable quality. Nora O'Mahony's Mrs. Ruddle



deserves special mention for its complete life and warmth; the same applies to John Stephenson's Supt. Kirk and, less so, to his Father in *Carmilla*, a slightly self-admiring performance, yet sensitive, as usual, to the possibilities of every line; Robert Bett's Const. Sellon was almost as good at times, while Blake Gifford wore the clothes but not the part of a clergyman in both plays with little life apart from typical sentimentality; finally, Jean Anderson's *Carmilla* was most unpleasantly true always, a really clever study of a most abnormal part, requiring constant depiction of hectic unhealthiness of mind—with proper support she would have made the show. But mid-July heat and small audiences take more effort to overcome than was to be had from the players, all sighing, one felt, for "fresh woods . . ."

Hilton Edwards and Michael MacLiammoir return to the Gate in Horse Show Week with Jean Cocteau's *The Infernal Machine*, reviewed in IRELAND TO-DAY (Vol. II., no. 2, p.79), a promising choice; after Jocasta has hanged herself three times for our delight, Sir John Vanbrugh's extremely *Provoked Wife* takes over, after which *Night Must Fall*. Then *Richard of Bordeaux*. If a certain person can "supply that mind," we shall later see Hamlet—if not . . . the certain person. Meanwhile, the Abbey, with nothing new to announce, is once more pleasing its patrons with the usual fare. And, sure, why shouldn't it?

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA

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**MUSIC**—continued from page 66

then this business of dashing across to "mama" for permission for this or that fiddling thing is an iniquitous and intolerable burden, complicating to an unworkable limit a sufficiently arduous task—particularly when, as here, personnel is limited in number. If these men are to do their work, they must be freed from this "swaddling-clothes" arrangement. If they are not fit and proper persons then the Department of Posts and Telegraphs was only committing its usual folly in sanctioning appointments whose implications it did not understand, and the remedy for its folly is in its own hands. Although why these men should be made scapegoats for a muddle created by others is somewhat difficult to understand.

We have now had over ten years' experience of broadcasting controlled by Posts and Telegraphs, years of humiliation when the cheapest shoddy was spewed out as being representative of our cultural standards, we, who hoped to see Broadcasting take its place as a much needed central cultural organization that in its productions would set a high, austere standard and lift the whole cultural tone of Irish life. Silence would have been better, would not have hurt our natural dignity. And there is no possibility of the fulfilment of old hopes until Broadcasting is taken from under the control of Posts and Telegraphs who, with a completely callous disregard of their duties as a responsible government department, have pulled down the service out of high places and made it serve their own gross material ends.

If I have written bitter words it is because of a keen memory of the humiliation we have endured.

EAMONN O GALLCHOBHAIR

# FILMS

## DISCONTINUITY

Discontinuity is of the essence of the cinema. The man who first changed the position of his camera to get a more effective shot laid the foundation of the film as an art-form.

Consider any simple incident, such as this:—A man (call him A) comes into a room in which another man, B, is seated. B looks up and sees A. Now if this happens in the course of a play, the audience sees at the same time the two characters and most of the room, and there is no ambiguity. If the scene is included in a film in one piece, as a "long shot," there is again no ambiguity. But let us suppose that the director decides that he wants "close-ups" of the two actors. The incident would then be written out thus in the shooting-script:—

1. Medium close-up. A opens the door, walks in and stops, looking at B (who is not in scene).

2. Medium close-up. B sitting at the table. He looks up and recognises A (who is not in scene).

Now things are fundamentally changed. Here we have pictures of two men, each looking at something which is not shown to the spectator. Why does the spectator assume, as we know he does, that the two men are looking at each other? One shot shows a door, and the other a chair; why does the spectator at once conclude, without any conscious train of reasoning, that these objects are in the same room? What is the connecting link?

The connecting link is a principle which is outside the film altogether, yet without which the film as we know it would be impossible. It may be stated as follows:—*The spectator always assumes that every picture shown on the screen is related in some way to its context.* If there are many ways in which the scene can be related to its context, he will choose the simplest. This is not the result of experience in cinema-going, or of a blind faith in the reasonableness of the director; it seems to be quite *a priori*. It operates even when its result is to reduce the film to absurdity. For instance, in the famous film *Berlin*, Ruttmann showed a shot of a golfer driving off from the tee. The next shot was of a tennis player in action. My first impression, and, I believe, inevitably that of everyone in the cinema, was that the golf-ball had been mishit on to the tennis-court, and had been adroitly returned by the tennis-player! The intended relation between the scenes (they were part of a sequence illustrating different forms of sport) could not be entertained by the mind until the simpler relation had been rejected as absurd.

It should be noted, too, that this principle works both ways. Not only is the second shot incomplete without the first; the first shot cannot be understood until the second appears. I have seen films in which the first scene of all did not acquire its full meaning until the last scene had been shown.

But now let us consider what happens when there are *no* simple relations between the scenes. Here are two such scenes:—

1. Long shot, looking down vertically. The busy streets of a large city.
2. Close-up, looking down vertically. An ants' nest (under glass), showing the ants passing busily to and fro.

Even the stupidest spectator could not suppose that these scenes had any direct relation to each other. He looks, therefore, for an indirect relation; and the only one which presents itself is the comparison between the movement of the ants in the one case, and of the traffic in the other. The city, then, is being likened to an ant-heap, and we have here a visual simile. But in order to convey this, a great deal more care must be taken in the scenes than would be necessary with an ordinary "straight" sequence. The position of the camera must be similar in each shot, the speed of movement of the ants must be increased to equal that of the traffic, even the photographic tone-values of one scene must be assimilated to those of the other. Otherwise, the simile will not "come across."

This kind of connection between scenes is obviously a higher form than the simple space-time connection of the previous example; but equally obviously, it is not the highest form of film art. It merely expresses in terms of film what can be equally well conveyed in words. But it is after this point that the real art of the film begins. A film is not worth making unless it conveys impressions that cannot be equally well expressed in words of any other medium; and the film, in its highest reaches, can convey emotions that are unnameable and inexplicable in words. The relations between the scenes grow more and more complex, and the composition of the scenes themselves more and more difficult; the slightest misplacement of the camera, the least alteration in lighting, and the scene misses its mark. In this type of film, each scene is intimately related to, and its primary meaning is profoundly modified by, not only the immediate context, but the whole of the rest of the film, both past and future. It becomes at last impossible to judge any sequence, still less any scene, without a knowledge of the whole of the film.

At this point it may very reasonably be asked, what films of this type have been made, and where can they be seen? The answer is unfortunately that no complete film of this nature has yet been made. Such productions as *Turksib* and *Earth* pointed the way; but the logical line of development of the cinema was broken off abruptly with the introduction of the talkies, and has not yet been resumed. The only hope of progress now seems to be in the efforts of intelligent amateur film-makers, who, unhampered by commercial considerations, censorship, or managerial vetoes, can pursue to the end the exploration of the possibilities of scene-relation. But such amateurs appear to be as imaginary as the films they might make.

G. F. DALTON

## COMING FILMS

For some months back Dublin has not seen any outstanding films, and it is, therefore, with much pleasure that we can await several important pictures, which should be showing within the next few months.



Foremost amongst coming films is Gunther Stapenhorst's production: "At Dawn" (Morgenrot), directed by Gustav Ucicky, with the great German actor, Rudolf Forster. This film deals with submarine warfare, and while spectacular at times, is handled from a very human viewpoint. The direction and acting are superb, and the noble quality of the film makes it a welcome exception to the usual routine of superficialities. Another German film of a lighter nature, but which, I am assured, on reliable authority, is quite entertaining, is "Liebeslied," an operatic film. "At Dawn" will be shown at the Stephen's Green this month.

"Camille," that ancient showpiece for the display of the great actress' technique, is now to serve Greta Garbo in partnership with Robert Taylor, and report arouses one's expectations.

"The Good Earth" is another fine film, which, if only for the fact that its caste includes Paul Muni and Luise Rainer, we may accept beforehand as worthwhile. The comment of a friend who has seen it is that the cinema has at last grown up. Other reports make favourable comparison with "Storm over Asia." The film, as readers probably know, is based on Pearl Buck's story of the life of Chinese peasants.

Two other films that promise much are "Winterset" and "You Only Live Once." The former is a complete film version of Maxwell Anderson's poetic play, and represents the revolutionary presentation of a gangster theme in verse. The second film is also on a gangster subject, and is directed by Fritz Lang. In effect the film is a social indictment and carries the implications of "Fury" much further. Sylvia Sidney and Henry Fonda play the leads. It is of interest that Lang is now working for Paramount and that there is the possibility of his directing an Ernst Toller subject with Catherine Cornell as star.

There is one film which Dublin should have seen long ago, Max Reinhardt's version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" has not been shown. Opinions might be divided on its merits, but, nevertheless, it is of importance that it be shown. Surely it cannot be the Censor this time.

Many films of Irish interest are due. "The Plough and the Stars" will, no doubt, be subjected to severe criticism, and if it is faithful to O'Casey, it will be doubly castigated.

Then there are the Irish studios. Several films are due from Killarney. A Dublin unit are completing "The Islandman," while the Anglo-Irish hybrids are thriving on the sentimental. Of these we cannot be too critical.

The Irish Film Society are organising their second season and expect much more support than they received in their first year. An ambitious and interesting programme is being prepared and membership being limited, those interested are advised to send in their names for addition to the Society's mailing list at the earliest opportunity. All communications should be sent to the Hon. Sec., at 41 S.C.R., Portobello, Dublin.

LIAM O LAOGHAIRE

# CORRESPONDENCE

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

SIR,

I am very honoured to find that I am more than once quoted in the current number of your stimulating review as a defender of Mr. Eric Gill's orthodoxy as an exponent of Catholic social principles. But this fact obliges me to say that there are views expressed in the latter part of his *Ownership and Industrialism*, in the same number, which seem to me to call for some further elucidation.

I am with Mr. Gill all along the line in his critique of capitalism. Seldom have I seen the essential issue so clearly and convincingly presented. But a number of points raised in the last five pages or so of his essay cannot, I think, pass without query.

Setting aside the seeming concessions to class-warfare on page 18, I would suggest that Mr. Gill's dismissal of "what is called co-partnership or profit-sharing" is altogether too summary. If really carried into effect (and we need discuss no other hypothesis) this would surely *not* mean that "the present conduct of industry would be continued and the present control remain in the same hands." Mr. Gill's argument assumes that the workers will convert their profits into capital and become capitalists. Catholic sociologists generally, led by the Pope in *Quadragesimo Anno*, propose that they convert their profits into property and become property-owners. This programme at least deserves Mr. Gill's consideration, the more so since he assures us that he "still desires the human world of human work."

More startling to the student of the Encyclicals and of social ethics is his assertion that "the workers are the *rightful* owners and controllers of industry . . . the proletarians are the *rightful* owners, the *only* possible owners" (italics mine). I can understand the position of the dialectical materialist who maintains that the proletariat is destined by inexorable historical law to become the sole inheritor of the existing means of production. I cannot understand how this can be maintained as an ethical "right" by Christians. However much the proletarians have been exploited, however unjustly they have been victimised, it is surely clear that neither the machines nor their products are the fruit *solely* of their labour on their own material, and that no number of wrongs can make a "right?"

And—in no carping spirit, but simply because this issue is so vital—I would invite Mr. Gill to tell us more exactly the meaning of "Work is an affair of the workers; who shall decide, who has the right to decide, how work shall be organised but those who do it?" With other Christian revolutionaries (and I do not see how any Christian can be anything else), I want the workers to be *in a position* to decide for themselves; but when I say "the workers" I do not mean a collectivity or the majority vote of a soviet, still less a bureaucracy of party-bosses, Five Year planners or Stakhovianist slave-drivers. I want Tom, Dick and Harry (with their wives) *each* to be able to decide for *himself*. And for that I demand for them *individual* economic independence, and, therefore, *private* property.

"Politics deals with things as they are." But Christian politics must revolutionise things as they are into things as they should be. In his *Work and Property* (reviewed with enthusiastic approbation in your current number, and by myself in the *Catholic Herald*) Mr. Gill states very clearly the fundamental contradiction between the ultimate aims of the Christian and the Communist

economic programmes: the Communists "demand public ownership for the sake of private use. . . . We demand private ownership for the sake of the public use of things made" (p. 109). We accept with gratitude Mr. Gill's assurance that he does not now contradict what he has written in the past, but few of his disciples and admirers will be undisturbed by a new note of seeming acquiescence in "things as they are," and will derive little comfort from the promise that the independent worker will receive the gracious "protection and encouragement" of the omnipotent operatives of large-scale industry. This can only mean that the independent worker is to cease to be independent and to become dependent on the tolerance of an industrialism which is to be intensified, supreme and all-absorbing. The Catholic social programme of deproletarianisation through the restoration of property means the liquidation of the tyranny of industrialism as well as of capitalism. Most of us will agree that, under existing circumstances, this will necessitate a pretty thoroughgoing collectivisation of the existing means of large-scale production as a preliminary to "attaining to property"—which, as Mr. Gill knows better than anybody, means private property. Emphatically the system of irresponsible "private ownership" of industrial enterprises, with its concomitant of manufacture for profit instead of for use, is criminal lunacy which cannot, must not, continue. But are we going to sit back and allow the "inevitable" evolution of Capitalist industrialism into Communist super-industrialism by meekly accepting "things as they are?" Or are we really going to work, agitate, pray for the "human world of human work," of which Mr. Gill has been the inspiring apostle and champion?—for the "unpopular Front," of which Mr. Sheehy wrote so finely in your April number?

Yours, etc.,

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

## INTERMARRIAGE

In the issue for July, Lady Dunalley writes, with all the fervour of an amateur and a novice on this difficult question.

Nine years of life in Tipperary, one book on Evolution recently read, the hearsay evidence of friends, and that old chestnut, the Jukes family in the United States of America, have combined to convince Lady Dunalley that within a century "race suicide will have taken place, and the people all insane and degenerate,"—she refers apparently to the less well-off classes.

To prevent this she proposes two remedies: Immigration and emigration.

Let us get to our diagnosis first and then consider the remedy.

To start with, I make Lady Dunalley a present of Tipperary, in which her home lies. Not because I grant her statements about it, but because my knowledge of the county is too small to base an argument on it.

First in order, Facts. It is true that hospitals, asylums and sanatoria are full. The primary reason for this is not necessarily due to a sudden increase in disease and insanity. It is, on the contrary, the direct result of a more scientific and wide-spread system of doctoring and nursing, with the corresponding improvement in hospital equipment and personnel. For one patient who say thirty years ago, was sent to hospital, there are, roughly twenty sent in from the country districts and some ten to fifteen from the towns to-day—the larger proportion of them are either cured or relieved. In earlier days they must drag out weary lives, or die prematurely, at home. They should have filled the hospitals but were not sent there. The feeling in regard to going into hospital has changed. Doctors and nurses now advise hospital treatment; the patient and his friends are willing; means of transport are available.



The same applies to sanatoria; and it may be added that returns show tuberculosis is being tackled in the earlier stages, with a consequently declining death-rate.

Mental hospitals are, it is true, terribly full. Here again, there is less unwillingness to send in cases which used to be hidden away as a disgrace. And we have, at the moment, not yet surmounted the consequences of the wicked world war, followed by the upheaval of the fight on our own soil.

Lady Dunalley has not only grossly overstated her case, her facts are upside down.

Of the mountainy and country districts in Tipperary I cannot speak, but I have knowledge of these in other parts of Ireland and it is my experience that they hold and are especially along the sea-board—Ireland having a mountainy coast, surrounding a central plain, a virile and active population, second to none in acuteness of intellect. True, they have not the beefy stoutness of the Belfast man, but their muscles are hard, their flesh firm and their powers, both of weight-lifting and of endurance, unequalled for their inches.

Undoubtedly, there is too much of feeble-mindedness and of insanity amongst us—Intermarriage is only one amongst many other causes contributing. The first cause is the hundreds of years of alien rule, which turned the people in upon themselves, denying them education and every other outlet and fostering an inferiority complex. I hold that mental trouble is directly in many instances due to an over-active brain, deprived of its rightful outlet. Too much capacity, not too little. I speak of the Irish people.

Let it be remembered that the wise Church to which the great majority of our people belong, has the strictest laws in regard to consanguinity in marriage.

As to the farmyard, the conditions obtaining do not warrant a comparison with human affairs.

As to the unhappy Jukes family, so often quoted in scientific periodicals, they were American not Irish, and have become the show-horse, trotted out on all occasions. Lady Dunalley is quite wrong when after stating that—"many of these abnormal people are at large," she adds: "and they all bear children." That is untrue. Some do—but our people know better than all to sin in that direction.

So far, a hasty dealing with causes and facts, all of which should be read in connection with Lady Dunalley's letter itself.

We come now to the remedies which are to cure these greatly overrated evils.

1. Immigration. The advent of the stranger. It is quaint in the Ireland of to-day to find that advocated. To alien immigration, after the Danish period, we owe the loss of a European and renowned culture and education, of our lands and liberties, personal, religious and material. It is not the moment to consider such a "remedy." One of the greatest dangers here and now is the economic infiltration which an undue influx of foreigners is encouraging. Immigration! the remedy is worse than the disease.

2. Emigration. With a population in the southern three-quarters of Ireland of roughly three million, with farms going derelict for want of workers, with places waiting to be filled; with the youth of the country, its best and chiefest wealth pouring out of it, day by day, we are invited to a remedy which is already the worst disease of the land. A remedy which of necessity leaves the body politic, weak, senile, infertile, sick—for the best must go and the less good remain-behind. "The Celts are going with a vengeance. Let them go."

And when all is said and done, maybe death would be better than the refined

and cultured paganism which to-day stands for civilisation with its poison-gas, its bombs, its calculated massacres of hundreds of thousands, its widow-making, man-maiming machines, its practical and theoretical negation of God. From that class of immigration, Good Lord deliver us.

In conclusion, even though Lady Dunalley has tackled too big a subject with scant forethought, she has probably done it with the best intentions. It may help her if she could realise that no one, especially not one of the Ascendancy coming a foreigner into the country, can hope, except under quite exceptional circumstances, to know that country in the little space of nine years. Things here are too intricate, causes too far back, present conditions too difficult, to make for knowledge in an outsider. Let me add that I do not pretend to such knowledge, though my profession as a nurse gives me many opportunities. I am still learning hard—though well I know that I can never fully attain.

GOBNAIT NI BHRUADAIR

SIRS,

May I express my disappointment at the empty scolding indulged in by Mr. Sorley Carolan, which reads like a poor imitation of Dr. Gogarty. I sympathise heartily with much of it. But, in my opinion, such as it is, such scolding is as futile as the tirades of gentlemen like Mr. Patrick Belton. The same seems to be true of the patronising wisdom of Mr. Sean O Faolain, who appears to me to get his literary standards from the *déracinés* of modern Europe.

However much one may be irritated by the old-maidish pietism of many Catholic actionists, it is a tragic folly for believers to forget that we are witnessing to-day the climax of the revolt against the unified Christian culture of Europe, which broke out in the 16th century. May I express my fear that you and many of your contributors forget this to some extent in your zeal for social justice and liberty; at least from the point of view of a sensitive Catholic community at grips with the all-pervasive vulgarity of modern infidelity.

But, as I said in my previous letter, I cherish the hope that this fear is unfounded and that you remember the danger as vividly as I claim to do; but that like Mr. Gill you think that in this crisis the wisest thing to do is to join the masses in their revolt against the Capitalist State. If this is the case, may I suggest strongly that this revolt is a disordered thing sundered from Christian tradition, initiated by muddled ultra-refined liberals and now led by the most radical revolutionaries Europe has known since the Albigenes. Though I think I am as keen on social reform as anybody, I cannot stomach such company, and find even the narrowest and most hysterical sodalist more tolerable.

But is it necessary to consort with either? Surely Ireland To-day, in spite of the sore temptation to see red caused by bourgeois Catholics, can show even the simplest reader that it glories in the ultimate truth that in Christ alone is truth and life, and if social reform demands the slightest disloyalty to Him it is prepared to suffer our social injustices in union with His Sacred Passion and Death. Shyness about such a declaration at a time like this seems to me just as wrong as the opposite extreme of which our egregious Christian Front is sometimes guilty.

Yours sincerely,

(REV.) GERALD FLANAGAN

St. Mary's Convent,  
Lowestoft, 14/7/'37.

# BOOK SECTION

## THE IRISH SHELF

### THE SEA-DIVIDED GAEL

SCOTS MERCENARY FORCES IN IRELAND. By Gerard A. Hayes-McCoy. Introduction by Professor Eoin MacNeill. (*Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd.* 1937. 392 pp. 15s.).

We have here a study of the contacts of Ireland and Innse Gall from a military and political point of view, with an amazing amount of new matter on the extent, influence and importance of Scottish fighting forces in the long struggle which preceded Kinsale.

Mr. McCoy has brought us down to hard facts about conditions in Western Scotland before the 17th century, and, in his preface, is something more than irreverent about Highland clannery and tartans and all that. He ascribes, and ascribes rightly, to the cult of the British army, much of the grotesque frippery that has festooned the subject of family history in the Highlands. He might have told us that even the kilt, as we know it to-day, was the invention of the house of Hanover—a cunning scheme to flatter Highland vanity and to adapt what had been a very different garment to conditions of warfare on the barren rocks of Aden. He puts all these things in their proper perspective by ignoring them and claims to have produced the first book on this subject.

The claim is, indeed, a modest one. He has written a very wonderful book, and yet, a book which, from many points of view, is a source of disappointment. So, first, for the asperities of criticism.

What strikes one immediately is the slovenly manner in which he has chosen to spell Irish names. The writer seems to have been unable to adopt any standard, even of his own, in this matter. Take his genealogy of the O Neills. The table begins with a Hugh and ends with an Aodh! If it were the other way about, something might be said to justify it. There is a Cormack in the list as well as a Cormac. What excuse is there for such appalling spellings as "Neil Conaghlach," "Sean Gald" and "Con Bachagh." *En passant*, what exactly is the pass standard in Irish in the Matriculation of the National University? I slur over downright innaccuracies in the table—who, for instance, was Sir Henry Og, grandson of Seaan Donnghaileach?—and I come to the MacDomhnaill pedigree. Here we are on less firm ground, for among the Highland genealogists all is confusion at many points, and, in their unlettered way, they have anglicised their names in the most arbitrary fashion. But why adopt their uninformed standards? Why should Ruaidhri have a brother Dougal? Was not Black John in reality Eoin Dubh, and would he not have rubbed his eyes to read that he had a brother Charles? If I were in a challenging mood, and not displaying an urbanity hitherto unknown in the annals of criticism, I should like to learn what authority, written or unwritten, Mr. McCoy has for the three Eoghans who appear in his table. There were Eoins among the MacDomhnaills in every age, but there never was an Eoghan. Even among the Galloglaigh families in Tyrone and Armagh, they were Eoins to the end. Let the writer remark that Eoin does not occur once in his O'Neill table, but that Eoghan does. Evidently he does not know that to the Gael they were names as distinct as, say, Roger and Ruth. They are such in Ulster to this day.

The text bristles with similar disappointments. A Connaughtman might be excused for speculating that the M'Coye of Tir Threana in Armagh (Fiants 6735) was a Galloglach. The name is to be found twice in the Patent Rolls of



James I., and a "Donogh M'Kooye" of the same barony was charged with wounding at the assizes of Armagh in 1615. The Armagh poet, Art MacCumhaigh, was one of this family. But a Connaughtman writing history ought not to make half a dozen wrong guesses as to who was that "one of the Gwirkins out of Gallen in Mayo" who was killed at Ardnarea in 1586. He was MacDhuarcan, and Mac Duarcan of Síol Neiridh will be found mentioned in the Four Masters as a follower of the Jordans of Gallen in 1416. Durcans are still numerous there. Similarly, on page 99, it is clear that he does not know who "Brian Cearbagh" was, and this leads him into a wrong inference as to the relations of that potentate with Somhairle Buidhe. Brian Carrach mac Chormuic mhic Sheagain Duibh mhic Dhomhnaill was no MacDomhnaill at all, but an O'Neill, the leader of half Clanna Aodha Buidhe, from Skerry near the Glens, across the Bann, to the borders of Tyrone. The Annals of Loch Ce record his death at 1590, and at the time in question he was of as much importance as Somhairle himself. For the historian of the place and period to have been oblivious of his existence is a drawback.

These are not isolated inaccuracies. If they were, I should pass them by in a more casual fashion. How are they to be explained? The fact is that Mr. McCoy has started off at the beginning of his career on a State Paper-chase. One would have thought that by now such adventures were *démodé*. And they are. The only basis for the study of our history, especially up to the time of the Boyne, is familiarity with Irish, and devotion to our native sources—our annals, our literature in prose and poetry, our personal names and our topography. I think it is no over-statement of the position to assert that our author tells us nothing new of the domestic activities and mentality of the Gael, even in so far as concerns the Highlands. His mind—the polarimeter—is *laevo-rotatory*, and deflects the light ever to the left; that is, to the State Paper side. Not that he is un-Irish in his point of view. The contrary is the case. But he has put himself in the position of having to carry on his narrative by constant reference to one type of document. His abuse of Irish names is the earliest indication of this mentality.

Have I nothing but censure for the book? Let not anything I have said detract from the essential significance of Mr. McCoy's work as an outstanding contribution to our knowledge of one phase of Irish history. One is amazed at his diligence, at the research he has conducted, at the amount of new ground he has broken; above all, at the capacity he has shown for sifting his complicated material and for retrieving truth from the verbiage of Tudor diplomacy. He has done more than most men's best in piecing together the amazing jigg-saw puzzle of plot and counter-plot in London and Edinburgh, in Ulster and the Isles. Enthusiasm for his subject has, perhaps, betrayed him into some exaggeration when he discusses the scope and measure of Hebridean influences in Ireland during the O'Neill wars. We were not entirely without fighting forces of our own. Our author sees a galloglach in every bush from Dun Libhisi to Dun Cearmna. Yet one is convinced of the importance to Hugh O'Neill of aid from the Isles when one reads the strange and novel story of the Highland fleet which scattered at the Copelands in 1595.

Everyone seriously interested in Irish history will purchase this book and will probably recognise in Mr. McCoy the most promising of our younger historians. Only—only, let him breed a sincere respect for scholarship, and let him learn from the work of, say, Father Paul Walsh—the only begetter—how necessary is first-hand acquaintance with Irish sources to an adequate understanding of the period he has dealt with.

SEAMUS O CEALLAIGH

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. (Humphrey Milford. Oxford University Press. pp. vii + 336. Map. 15s.).

Whether we like it or not, the British Empire is a marvellous institution. As a political, man-made synthesis, no work we have seen has revealed it so completely and so intimately as this analysis by a "Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs." The tradition that can make so many warring interests cohere even on a basis of self-interest is marvellous. Yet always the analysis forces us to say *cui bono*? and the answer inevitably and ever is—England's. Primarily, the investment, the worry and responsibility, and the profit is hers. All else is management, a vast and deep comprehension, and a watchful and matriarchal control. A good pretence of co-equal participation by the Dominions is put up, but when it comes to Spain or a sudden move by some mad dog that imperils *mare nostrum*, is it not the imperative voice of England alone that speaks, and speaks moreover from the viewpoint primarily of an industrialised island people of forty millions, pitched westward of Europe's fevered camps, vulnerable and far from self-contained?

Individually, the countries of the Empire are comprehensively treated of, from the "mother" kingdom down through the senior Dominions to the youngest member, the Irish Free State (*sic*), which, it is the pride of all Irish imperialists, should be recognised, too, as a mother country of the Empire. Then follow India and the colonies, the inclusion of which in the system converts it from the Commonwealth stage to that of Empire. A possible defect in the treatment which might be pointed out respectfully to the Institute is that the whole is compiled, self-confessedly, solely by those whose loyal acceptance of the whole fabric of the imperial system is unquestioned. Hence, however, objective the treatment aimed at, no direct voice is given to the nationalist of South Africa, who holds himself free to secede or to remain neutral during a war of England's, to the *Canadien*, who may want a separate Quebec Dominion, to the average Canadian whose bonds with the U.S.A. progressively become stronger than with the ever-weakening bonds with the "home" country. Still less representative are the twenty odd pages devoted exclusively to the Irish Free State (again *sic*), a model of succinct and informative summarization, yet coloured by the most unrepresentative of outlooks. We can only suspect, but the name of Mr. Frank MacDermot is the only familiar Irish one in the list mentioned in the Foreword as having given "much valuable help and criticism," and we must be forgiven for assuming that the standpoint adopted is largely his, which, for better or worse, is one not shared by ten per cent. of the people: which is in no way to belittle his valuable contribution to the public life of the country.

It would be quite impossible to do justice to this magnificent, and, of course, beautifully-produced, book. No less than a hundred pages are devoted to such Imperial problems as Defence, the Colonial Question, problems of economic policy, the possibility of a Commonwealth Tribunal, Nationality and Citizenship, Population and Migration. To the serious student, the work is indispensable, and no library should fail in its duty to provide it for him.

L. J. R.

GENEVA VERSUS PEACE. By Comte de Saint-Aulaire, translated by Francis Jackson. (Sheed and Ward, London, 1937. pp. 272. 7s. 6d.).

This book, well translated and pleasant to read, is packed with a reasoning which is far from easy to follow. As the name of the book implies, its object

is to prove the futility and even power for evil of the League of Nations ; and, as a one-sided statement of the case against that institution, it is excellent—nothing is, indeed, omitted which could be considered as in any sense disadvantageous to the League. The difficulty in following the detailed reasoning of the Comte is that, although the subject matter of the work is, conventionally, divided into eight sections in the table of contents, the same points are repeatedly raised, and in passages where their occurrence can only be explained by the fact that the author's particular style, marked by short concise sentences and a wealth of metaphor, gives more weight to a good verbal effect than to strict logical order.

The main grounds on which the author's case against the League is based are that it was founded on an inequality in Law (in, for instance, the preponderant part assigned to the British Empire with its plurality of votes), works on privilege (in bowing to might and, in one of its provisions (art. 21), sanctifying the rule of strength in conceding undue influence to the guiding principles formulated by certain of the larger powers) ; is run by free-masonry and other underground forces, while allowing no place to Christian organisations, and particularly to the Catholic Church ; has been guilty of gross favouritism in its abstention from the imposition of serious sanctions until the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, acts, on the whole, at the whim, and for the benefit of, Germany and Russia. This last assertion will immediately strike most readers as a most astounding one, especially in so far as it relates to Germany. The author, however, who is an experienced old-time diplomat, writes consistently from the standpoint of a Frenchman who, on the one hand, regards Germany as the eternal enemy, and on the other is unwilling to fall in with the comparatively recent French volte-face in its attitude to Russia, the treaty with which is condemned in the strongest terms in this book. In the view of the Comte de Saint-Aulaire, Germany, by the terms she obtained at Locarno, legally acquired a right to specially favourable treatment as a member of the League and, now that she has left that body, is exerting an even stronger influence on its counsels, as is particularly shown by the extent to which her wishes in Danzig have been met. This last point is probably true enough and, indeed, the generalisation that a strong power outside an organisation working for peace, to whose principles most other strong powers subscribe, would seem to be a safe one, borne out by, for instance, the development of the Non-Intervention Pact on Spain.

Curiously enough, however, the author's view of the result of the Locarno Treaty, which is dealt with in some detail, and from what is, at any rate, a new angle, is in contradiction with what might be said to be his view as to the best line to take with the League, which is briefly to abolish it completely and let the Old Diplomacy, for which the upholders of the League consider it to be very desirable and sound substitute, recover its former power : for the Locarno Treaty is essentially a product of the methods of Old Diplomacy, even if, as the author maintains, Stresemann did badly beat Briand.

MICHAEL O'NEILL-KING

### THE ARTS IN RUSSIA

THE SEVEN SOVIET ARTS. By Kurt London. (London : *Faber and Faber*. pp. 381 + xi. 15s.).

Russia of old was symbolised as the Bear, uncouth, clumsily powerful, an alien in the menagerie that is Europe ; to-day the Old Bear has been tamed, has taught all the Seven Little Bears their lessons and has built a house where porridge and beds not done to their liking are sniffed at as suspiciously and



as summarily rejected as in the children's tale. Dr. London's freshly written and most interesting book describes clearly the taming, the lessons, the sniffing and the rejecting that have made the new Russia. He finds that no Little Bear has yet produced much art—they are too young, they are not yet used to this new house, and they are too sure of their tastes and reject too summarily. In the main, this was to be expected from a bureaucracy that has repelled such sympathisers with the basic idea as Gide and Trotsky.

His book has special value, however, because of its detachment from the usual examination of the *physical* development of the Soviet Union, socially, politically and industrially, in steady concentration on the problems of the artist adapting himself to the needs of a mass mind developing in a forcing-house of propaganda to which the artist must subscribe or starve. The author, an obvious Liberal of Left, *Fauve*, outlook on matters cultural, neither a Communist nor a Fascist, makes that quite clear.

Now, whatever one may think of the ethics of Communism, no one can deny the almost incredible scale of their physical achievements; no amount of petty cavilling at absurdities of organisation, at wastage, speculation and inefficiency locally, and at a lower standard of living (all of which the Soviet admits—not too graciously, the author found), can gainsay the facts that ambitious undertakings—new cities, new farming collectives, new industrial centres—are coming into fruitful being. But the most ambitious of all has been the attempt to transform a population of forty races, the vast majority millions of semi-savage illiterates, so successful that they are developing into a virile and active people, whom Dr. London believes will be the most cultured race in Europe in 50 years' time. He examines, in much detail, the cultural organisation by which this is being effected; these details are the most vital part of his book, suggesting to such in the West as believe that Russia is the modern menace, how best to oppose it—sitting still will not do much good when the enemy is steadily training himself, and along very sound lines, too.

That organisation covers the Seven Arts—Music, Literature, Theatre, Opera and Ballet, Film, Architecture and Beaux Arts (Painting, Sculpture and Applied Arts); the Central Arts Committee is the main organ of control and his verbatim reports of its handling of typical "antisocial" artists, say, Shostakovich of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* fame, and Nikritin, a painter of real sincerity and some ability whose rather ordinary work was found too "advanced," make rather sad reading as do supporting statements in *Pravda*, the Party paper, and by prominent critics, several well-known abroad. His revelations do little to enhance one's respect for them. In aiming, and *succeeding*, in bringing art to the people on a scale unheard of, unthinkable, in the capitalist West, the Committee has forced all artists to sacrifice their individuality of expression, their personal opinions, their natural urge to develop technical possibilities by experiment; they must present commonplace facts to an undeveloped audience in a manner easy to grasp yet always stressing such facts as favour the Soviet regime. This is as close as one can get, with Dr. London's help, to the dogma of "socialist realism" which has so often puzzled Western students of Soviet art, especially in the theatre; he himself could get no coherent definition of it from anyone in Russia—Tairov's subtleties are amusingly discreet, for instance, on this point. Art is for the masses, for the here and now, in Russia—a logical outcome of dialectical materialism; accordingly such "dope" as mysticism, spirituality, even free imagination is ruled out—it is not realistic to ignore the actual, it is not socialist to ignore the masses. In this Dr. London fully supports such personal accounts as Igor Schwesoff's *Bozroi*.

Yet even in Gorky, especially in Lunacharsky, above all in the pre-revolutionary writers whose pessimistic realism supplied the impetus for the Revolution, these qualities are plainly apparent; in Dostoevsky, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoi, Bely, Blok and many more poets, novelists and playwrights, we can see this Russian capacity for vivid exaltation, for self-abnegation, even self-annihilation, that made easy the acceptance of Communism in the abstract and its realisation, at immense sacrifice, in practice. It was this Eastern self-disregard, this intensity and range of feeling that made the Bear an alien, that still repels the Western disciplined mind: that Russia is now producing a race of opposite taste, lacking in religion, fanatics for the Cause, and apparently completely satisfied with an art Victorian in style and even more Victorian in content, is a tribute to the effectiveness of the cultural machine in moulding opinion. With proper guidance that machine could do wonders—we lack completely anything so efficient. That is the message of this book. I should have liked a fuller statement of the popular reaction to this art than is given: the Russian cannot be so reversed in mentality as seems apparent.

Critically the author's standards are cosmopolitan, and while, apparently, as materialist as the Russians—he seems to find no further use for art than individual expression, which means little—his criticisms are sound, being mainly concerned with technique and regarding this in the light of the latest achievements in each field (Milhaud, Klee, Alban Berg, Hindemith, are some of his favourites, for example). Accordingly, this book is an excellent supplement to such prior authorities as Gleb Struve's *Soviet Russian Literature*, Stanislavsky, Kommisarjevsky, Max Eastman, Bryher, Huntley Carter, etc., and the "Studio" production *Art in the U.S.S.R.*, which reveals in its illustrations, officially selected, the depressing sameness of mediocrity here described. Sections of real interest, cited at random, are reports on theatre practice, the charming Moscow Children's Theatre, Ballet classically moribund, Opera almost as dead, radio and gramophone, and, especially, the marvellous talent in all arts coming to light in nomadic tribes and the smaller republics, the Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, say, whose work he often found of more promise than that to be seen in White Russia. The book is well illustrated and produced with the publishers' usual care and resulting beauty.

SEÁN Ó MEÁDHRA

### SCIENCE AND RELIGION

THE MODERN MIND. By Michael Roberts. (*Faber and Faber*. 8s. 6d.) pp. 284.

Mr. Roberts has, God wot, "a large feeld to ere"—several large fields, in fact: those of philosophy, science, religion and poetry—and he ploughs pretty thoroughly. His book is an historical outline (with modern commentary) of English thought since the thirteenth century, more particularly of the relations of scientific knowledge and religious doctrine. To hold that these two conflict is to land oneself in atheism, in fundamentalism, or in an even more regrettable duplicity of mind. Mr. Roberts is concerned to show that they do not conflict. The concepts necessary to the investigation of the material world have a strict and limited scientific use: their validity does not extend beyond their own particular purpose. The evidence of the inner senses by which we feel the force of spiritual truths is a field of knowledge having its own discipline and method.

Rather oddly, perhaps, Mr. Roberts describes his work as "a study of some changes in the use of the English language." His favourite text is the dictum of John Dennis, "Poetry is the natural language of Religion"; and his thesis

is that with the spread of scientific habits of thought religion has gradually ceased to speak its natural language :

By accepting the language of the scientists, it (the Church) nurtured an implicit philosophy which was hostile to its own essential doctrines, and in aiming at material intelligence it lost the power of persuasion.

Scientific reality still means something which can be measured by mechanical instruments, and the kind of speech which is best suited to dealing with such things is still accepted as if it were capable of dealing with all experience. That which cannot be said in the language of mechanics is thought to be false, and religion and poetry are, therefore, rejected, not on their own merits, but by an irrelevant criterion.

Some may think that because it deals with English thought, the subject of this book is a thousand miles away. But the need for poetry in the schools of Ireland, presented as poetry, is as urgent as it is anywhere. Education "has been firmly directed against any use of language that would be adequate to deal with spiritual and moral objects"; "the capacity to hear and understand the overtones of meaning has slowly but continuously declined." Let us remember Darwin's confession :

If I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week ; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

Mr. Roberts' conclusion is the need for a return to the spiritual life :

Without religious belief, it is possible to sway men away from faith in love, kindness and confidence to a belief in strength, the infinite potentialities of intellect, the value of hostility, and the necessity of fear. Against this change the Church with its Christian doctrine is a barrier.

But though he gives short shrift alike to the enemies and the misguided friends of religion (the "religious" mechanists and the mechanistic defenders of religion) Mr. Roberts is no less critical of the Church itself. The Church, he insists, must set its own house in order before it can initiate a spiritual revival :

For two generations, the conception of God preached from Christian pulpits has been of a lower mental order than the conception of the material world taught in any technical institute or in the science classes of our elementary schools.

It must be admitted that the hostile critic is often justified when he sees in the Church and its doctrines only a disguised defence of private profit-making.

The Church's concern is with the spirit alone ("Control of material power and of means of coercion is inimical to moral leadership"); at the same time "churchmen must show that their sense of spiritual values does not make them less sensitive to social and economic injustice than other men are."

The book suffers from a tendency to substitute reiteration and dogmatic statement for argument, but Mr. Roberts is admirably level-headed and his obvious sincerity compels attention.

FITZROY PYLE

### THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

ENGLAND : CRADLE OF CO-OPERATION. By S. R. Elliott. (*Faber and Faber*. 8s. 6d.).

The inclusion of the co-operative movement among the potent agents



connected with the rise of democracy and the development of social freedom in Britain is rather a new idea. Yet co-operation for business purposes has been intimately associated with the struggle of the producer and consumer against the exploitation of individualistic capitalism. From the early efforts of the Rochdale pioneers who began in 1844 with a capital of £28 to achieve the ideals of Owen and other writers, whose aim was "price without profit," right up to the triumphs of the great co-operative organisation of the present day controlling a trade turn-over of £300,000,000 per annum, a bank, an insurance society and a national newspaper, the history of the movement in Britain is an instructive as well as a fascinating story. The initial reverses, the failures, the anti co-operative efforts on the parts of combines and other interests, and the gradual progress and increasing influence of the co-operative idea are painted into the picture of the industrial development of the country during the period under review in such a way that the author gives an account of the economic and industrial life which is not alone of considerable utility to the student but highly instructive to the ordinary reader.

Mr. Elliott is a convinced co-operator. He describes the co-operative movement as "a state within a state," and credits the paying of dividend on purchases with solving "the problem of saving" and with having "relegated capital from a position of overlordship to the role of servant in industry." Difficulties experienced in retail trade forced the co-operative movement into wholesale business, and the antagonism of vested interests induced it to undertake production both of primary products and of a great variety of manufactured articles. In this connection the advantage of producing for a known market is stressed, ensuring among other things no loss from unsold stock.

The co-operative idea is nothing new in the minds of Irishmen. Co-operative creameries and stores are to be found in almost every county. The rugged road which these have had to travel to reach the present goal is quite familiar, at least to the rural community. The parallel rise of co-operation in Britain, which curiously has been, more or less, confined to the urban population, is a subject of interesting study.

E. J. S.

## POETRY AND DRAMA

OUT OF THE PICTURE. By Louis MacNeice. (London : *Faber and Faber*. pp. 127. 6s. net.).

By their choruses, "The Dog Beneath the Skin" and "The Ascent of F6" were saved from utter failure ; the weakness of their construction and their undramatic quality being skilfully hidden beneath the excellence of their verse : they succeeded in being what they set out to be, verse plays, and if the play part was subordinated to the verse that subordination was not too noticeable.

Mr. MacNeice's opus is, however, quite another pair of trousers. Here we have a man who in 1935 produced a volume of poems in which the technique and the all-round standard of the verse was quite exceptional, so much so, that we looked forward with what Messrs. Faber are fond of calling "eager curiosity" to his next work, a translation of the "Agamemnon." This appeared last year and was a distinct flop. That is not to say that it was not a scholarly and weighty translation, but the verse spread around the page like tripwires and sent the reader sprawling at every other line, while the drama of the original hid demurely beneath the unlovely verse. It was a triumph of mind over matter, the professor had conquered the poet.

Now comes "Out of the Picture," a play with a most unfortunate title and little else. Beyond the fact that the author is enthusiastically anti-Fascist, anti-Communist and anti-Psycho-analysis we gather little. There is undoubtedly a message somewhere, but it appears to have become mislaid along with the plot. The verse is nowhere successful, hovering unhappily as it does between the music-hall jingles of Auden and the more serious verse of Auden. MacNeice, however, has not the humour to make the jingles amusing and startling, nor the ability to bind living verse into the drama.

" . . . . My curse on plays

That have to be set up in fifty ways "

says Yeats, but MacNeice does not appear to have done more than split his play fifty ways.

The characters, too, change from minute to minute, and while character change is a necessary thing in the true play, some reason is usually adduced for this change. But, here, Portright, who starts as a vague and artistically conscientious young man, ends as an anarchic and rather silly murderer. The whole thing is apparently a terrific satire, but we are left in the dark as to what it is a satire on.

Mr. MacNeice is unsuccessful as a young English poet ; perhaps he is trying too hard to be English. He has said :

But I cannot deny my past to which my self is wed,

The woven figure cannot undo its thread.

Is he standing in the way of his soul's steam-tractors ?

**THE DISAPPEARING CASTLE.** By Charles Madge. (London : *Faber and Faber*. pp. 70. 6s. net.).

There is some peculiar quality which makes a definite line of distinction between the poet and the poetaster, a depth, perhaps, or a richness : it is impossible to define exactly what it is, but it is clearly recognisable. When we read such lines as the following there can be no doubt, for me, at any rate, that the writer of them is a poet :—

The sun, of whose terrain we creatures are

Is the director of all human love,

Unit of time and circle round the earth

And we are the commotion born of love

And slanted rays of that illustrious star

Peregrine of the crowded fields of birth . . . .

I take these lines at random, but the majority of this book is as good as this, except where Mr. Madge tries to be smart and gives us chunks of prose faintly satirical in their application but certainly not suitable for inclusion with his other work.

Much of Mr. Madge's poetry is influenced by the Surrealists, but he has absorbed his influences and does not attempt, as do so many other English writers, to give an Englished version of his masters. He is a sufficiently vital and original person to retain his own personality while subjecting himself to that movement which has swallowed so many promising writers.

This is Mr. Madge's first volume of poems, and while looking forward to his next appearance, I pray earnestly it will not be in the form of a verse play.

DONAGH MACDONAGH

### LORCA

**LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF A BULL-FIGHTER, and OTHER POEMS.** By Federico García Lorca in the original Spanish, with the English translation by A. L. Lloyd. (*Heinemann*. 6s.).

How little we know of Spain who know only the lovely names of her towns

coupled with reports of raids by Junker bombers and Henckel fighters, who had before only a hint of guide-book colour and a spate of belying romance. Here are some of the poems of Lorca, killed in Granada in August, 1936, of the Fascist invasion. The bitterness of it that one who was so alive, so real, so much a man, should have died by a firing squad. The pity is not for Lorca:

"Death has covered him with a pale sulphur

And has set upon him the head of a sombre minotaur."

The pity is for the men who killed him in August in Granada. For Federico García Lorca was a poet of the people of Spain, a poet of the people whose like Ireland knew in the anonymous poets of the *Love Songs of Connacht*. But where these wrote folk-songs, Lorca, enriched by the barbaric vitality of the *cante jondo*, the folk-song of the Andalusian cafés, emerges a poet, whose like, for this same poignant richness and vitality, is not known to-day in mechanised Europe.

The Lament for Ignacio Sanchez Mejías is a magnificent, full-blooded, living thing.

"The bull does not know you, nor the fig tree,  
nor horses, nor the ants in your own house.  
The child does not know you, nor the afternoon,  
for you are dead for ever."

"I want to see here men of hard voices;  
- Those who break horses and who dam rivers;  
Men of sonorous skeleton, and who sing,  
With a mouth full of sun and flints.

Here I would see them before this stone,  
Before this body with its breaking reins,  
I want them to show me how he may escape,  
This captain bound in death."

But the English has an abstract quality, a tenuousness, a quality of softness that is not in the Spanish. Nothing in English can achieve the magical effect of the repetition in every second line throughout the first part of the Lament of the refrain—"A las cinco de la tarde." The literal translation—"At five in the afternoon," is banal. Here, where the rhythm and the emotive content of sound are of more moment than any meaning, the translator might have taken greater liberties. But altogether the translations are excellently done and give Lorca as well as translation can.

Among the other poems—"The Faithless Wife," is a most lovely thing.

The songs of Lorca were sung in cafés, by men who could not read, by men who did not know his name. Spain, perhaps, alone of all European countries in this century, did, in Lorca, Alberti, earlier in Machado, produce poets who were popular without affectation or condescension. It seems that not many years ago a poet might have lived in Spain with a full heart. Alas for her enlightenment—that began so wisely with the death of Federico García Lorca.

Read these poems, and in them you will see what our progress is maniacally destroying, a Catholic richness and a medieval integrity that Spain somehow retained after the 19th century.

"Across the burnt-out skies  
the Monstrances blaze  
between the throats of the rivulets  
and bouquets of nightingales.  
Shatter the stained-glass windows!



Eulalia white in the snowfield.  
 Angels and seraphim are crying :  
 Holy, Holy, Holy.

This last is from "The Martyrdom of St. Eulalia."

EDWARD SHEEHY

## FICTION

IN PARENTHESIS. By David Jones. (*Faber and Faber*. 10s. 6d.). pp. 225.

Mr. Jones has put up his brush and pencil to tell us very effectively of his part in the great war, which he views as an aside—a sombre and disrupting interval in his life.

His strange style and vivid description bring back all too well the overpowering sufferings, and horrible life of the front-line fighters, who relieved the old decimated Regulars in late 1915.

To his mind the bewildered and innocently blasphemous civilian turned soldier is one with the ancient heroes in the legendary tales of the Celt and the Saxon, though the "stuff" of modern war makes him the patient victim of a terrible occasion, and this impression is enhanced by two sad and telling drawings.

The story covers no set period. It is set in the frame work of incidents which formed the war routine—an embarkation, billets, front line occupation, trench warfare, relief, a move, and an attack, and it is a record of concentrated misery, queerly reminiscent of the poem of Sassoon wherein the troops carrying war gear shoulder high across a bleak muddy horizon on the way to the line of death are likened to "Modern Christs."

The only cheerful troops he meets are one or two "Mon's Angles," who despair of the New Army, and who as professionals had learned the technique of callously inhibiting all grisly feelings, and packing them away in the old kit-bag.

This book should be in the hands of all who are inclined to settle affairs by force of arms, and it might well be dedicated to the League of Nations.

JOHN LUCY

A TROJAN ENDING. By Laura Riding. (*Seizin, Constable*. 8s. 6d.)

Admirers of Miss Riding's poetry will regard with displeasure her incursion into the inferior novel-form; novelists, perhaps, with annoyance, the easy triumph of one accustomed to the superior organisation of matter in which a poet is trained. This interpretation of the meaning of Troy constitutes, in fact, a novel, amiable, profound, witty, exactly observant of human nature, and, above all, polite, which places it in the best tradition of the modern novel. It has even a theory to illustrate, a reason for being written. The theory is that this is a final age of time, that we are really alive, and that Troy is the first time one meets, going backwards through history, of which it can be said that its people were also really alive: that was serious; this is serious. It is a selfish theory, and a novel is no place to put it, anyhow. Neither can one do Miss Riding the condescension of applying that complacent convention by which the justness or not of a theory propounded would be unimportant provided the characterisation were real, the description of Nature faithful, and the dialogue charming. At the same time, one reads the book with pleasure; it has an engaging civilised aroma, which only Americans seem able to distil. Though what does it matter that Priam, Hector and Achilles are made into symbols (as a palliative?) They are too tidy, and Cressida, who is the authoress's standard-bearer, is irritating. Chaucer knew her better. The really valuable things are Miss Riding's disquisitions on women.

DENIS DEVLIN

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## THE MONTH IN RETROSPECT. (16 JUNE—15 JULY.)

**DAIL** General Election Result: Fianna Fail, 69 deputies; Fine Gael, 48; Labour, 13; Independent, 8; figures at dissolution were 77, 53, 8 and 12; first preference votes were 574,752, 421,953, 113,758, and 129,281. The voting in the plebiscite on the draft constitution was, Register, 1,777,823; poll, 1,328,246; valid votes, 1,212,050, for 685,105; against, 526,945. After the election Mr. de Valera said that if Fianna Fail assumed office it would be to pursue its own policy and no other. Old I.R.A. association expressed alarm at Mr. de Valera's attitude to Republic, but some branches dissociated themselves from the criticism. Demonstration by independent republicans at Bodinstown. Mr. de Valera attended Provost's garden party in Trinity College. Mr. Cosgrave's suggestion that confidential correspondence between himself and Sir Haldane Porter might have been opened by Government official strongly denied by Government. Feiseanna in London, Newry and Galway. At Balbriggan Feis, Cu Uladh said Irish would be restored from the cities. Opening Dublin examination for Gaeltacht Scholarships, Sinead Bean de Valera appealed to children to save Irish. In paper in Irish at Maynooth Union, an tAthair Michael O'Murchadha said there was great need and demand for virile drama in Irish. Manchester Gaelic League broadcasted Irish concert over B.B.C. system. Irish representatives at Celtic Congress in Edinburgh; greetings sent to An Craoibhin, and proposals prepared following Mr. de Valera's offer to help pan-Celtic movement. At Orange Twelfth of July celebrations, Lord Craigavon asked Saorstát not to interfere with "Ulster." In appropriation debate in Northern Parliament, T. J. Campbell charged Government with deliberately excluding Catholics from all Government appointments. Plea for the rural movement made by Fr. John Hayes at Irish College, Paris, Union. At Maynooth Union meeting, Fr. E. Kissane said danger, if any, to religion was from snobbish middle-class and not from workers;

Serious hold-up of municipal housing, and Dublin Corporation appealed to both parties to end building trade dispute, which reached its fifteenth week. Corporation applied for sites for 1,032 new houses at Donnycarney and 1,950 at Cabra. After lively Corporation debate, Alderman Byrne elected Lord Mayor of Dublin for eighth time. Successful exhibition of work of 500 students at Bray Technical Schools, a feature being furniture made by business men and civil servants in evenings. Completely successful return trial flights on new commercial air line between Foynes and Botwood by "Caledonia" and "American Clipper." Col. Lindberg visited Foynes and Rynanna. Dublin-Douglas air mail service commenced. Returns for Saorstát external trade for year ended May showed imports, £41,111,000, and exports, £22,382,000, as against £37,979,000 and £20,544,000 in previous year; returns for June showed rise in exports of cattle to Britain from £320,000 in previous year to £433,476, while exports of pigs fell from £21,000 to £4,000.

At Library Association Conference in Dundalk, Prof. Howley, President, said recent fiction was a nightmare to librarians and good books were often spoiled by a little excess; Daithi O Beargha drew attention to competition from "twopenny commercial libraries." Judgment for defendants given in London in action against newspaper for libel by author of "Jackets Green." Galway Commercial Library fined for having prohibited books. New quarterly review, "Bonaventura," issued in Dublin. Sean O Suilleabhain and Gearoid O'Murchadha lectured to International Folklore Congress in Edinburgh. Lecturing in U.C.D., Prof. Stith Thompson, Indiana University, said Ireland was the most important country for study of folklore. Castiglione's "Shepherdess Discovering Infant Cyrus" purchased by National Gallery. Purser-Griffith scholarship in painting awarded to Elizabeth Curran. Honorary doctorates were conferred by National University on Hugh O'Neill Hencken, Harvard; Frederick N. Robinson, Harvard; Wm. W. Bishop, Michigan; Carl von Sydow, Lund; and Archbishop Finbar Ryan; by Dublin University on Sir Jos. Varcroft, John Stopford, Robt. J. Bonner, Campbell C. Edgar, and Robin Flower; and by Queen's University on Senator Armstrong, Viscount Halisham, Major-Gen. Weir West, Prof. John Mackail, Prof. Wm. Osborne, and Rt. Rev. John Waddell. National University appointed Father James, Professor of Philosophy, and Seamus Pender, Lecturer in History, in Cork; and Fr. Felim O'Brien, Professor of Philosophy, and Cormac O Ceallaigh, Lecturer in Science, in Galway. Birthday party in London to Mrs. Charlotte Despard, aged 93.

Over 600 hundred members of Irish Brigade with Spanish Insurgents returned to Dublin; searched for arms by police on landing; reception in Mansion House not attended by some groups, who stated that Brigade returned because of leadership difficulties. Representations made by Government in connection with murder by militiamen in Bilbao of Brebie Boland Lyons, a native of Youghal. Dr. E. Hempel, new German Minister to Saorstát, arrived in Dublin. Fall of Bastille celebrated by special programme on Radio Athlone; reception at French Legation. Army Jumping Team successful at Olympia, Amsterdam and Lucerne. American Army Jumping Team arrived for Dublin Horse Show. Among visitors were: Al. Smith, Governor New York State; Dr. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore; Rev. T. Shanley, Pastor of New York Negro Parish; Otto Burghauser, Conductor of Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.



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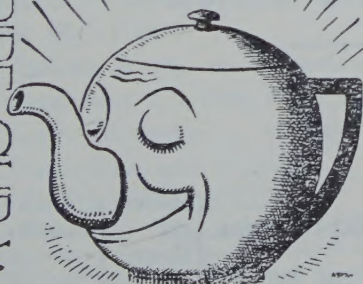
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